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BY

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THE

ELECTION OF 1935

IN NEW ZEALAND.

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PREFACE.

An account of an election undoubtedly benefits from the perspective view that may be gained with the lapse of fifteen years, but it also suffered from the disappearance of documentary material, and from the loss of atmosphere. A participant in the 1935 election in New Zealand might have been better able to judge the state of that elusive quality - public opinion, than one who has to rely partly on others' recollections in tranquillity, of the emotions stirred then.

There are, of course, newspapers and other journals to mirror the feelings of the times, but in election campaigns their reflections are not reliable, because they too have political opinions. Nevertheless, though partial to the government, the newspapers must be the main source of information on electoral activities, since only they provide a continuous commentary. While recognising the important part played by newspapers in elections, I have attempted to correct their distortion of the political picture by references to as many other sources as possible. There have been difficulties in making a balanced study since the lapse of time has removed much valuable material.

Only the Labour Party office staff could help much with source material - the pamphlets, posters and

literature of ephemeral value. The National Party's Head Office was not opened until 1936. Having been defeated in the 1935 election, they faced a much altered situation, so that possibly the election material used in the previous year seemed irrelevant. Certainly nothing was kept. The same problem exists in relation to the Democrat Party, which was soon disbanded, and the Communist Party, which had no resources or staff for storing reference material. The printing offices which produced the campaign literature had no samples for inspection. Apparently they keep election material for three years only (the time between elections).

By contrast, at the Labour Party's Wellington office, there are large bundles of pamphlets, newspaper clippings, advertising literature and similar material for each election and for the years between. Whereas with information about the Labour Party, the problem was to sift and prune, with other organised parties and the lesser groups and Independents the difficulty was to build up fragmentary gleanings into an adequate assessment. Much useful literature, similar to that which the Labour Party has, could probably be obtained from the Democrat organiser and others like him, who as yet have not made available papers stored in basements. Even libraries have not made systematic collections of election literature until after 1935, and very little supplementary material has been de-

posited with them by gift or bequest.

Every effort was made to assist me in my research by the staffs of the General Assembly Library and the Turnbull Library, and of the Wellington and Christchurch city libraries. My thanks are due to these members for their ready assistance. I am especially grateful for the help and courtesy I received from those connected with the National, Labour and Democrat organisations and for their entrusting me with records which could be used in a partisan spirit.

I owe much to the help obtained from two texts dealing with British electoral organisation, "Parliamentary Representation", by J.F.S. Ross, and "The British General Election of 1945", by R.B. McCallum and A. Readman. There were no comparable New Zealand studies to assist me, so that much of the guidance for the nature of the investigation and the form of the resultant thesis came from these two books.

There are, of course, differences between the two countries' electoral arrangements, compelling a New Zealand observer to follow his own lines of research. He must also recognise that the emphasis in political thought in each country lies in different planes. In 1935 the campaign was concentrated on the economic organisation of the country, with the topic of guaranteed prices dominating

all other issues.

The accent on party and policy tends to disguise the part played by the public in deciding the final issue of accepting or rejecting what was offered. The elector can not be forgotten, however. The student must attempt to bring all the forces at work, in to clear focus and from the combination of causes and results make a complete picture. He may not be able to explain, as election results are generally mystifying, and is certainly not expected to vindicate them, but having begun the work of clarification, may leave the rest of the task to history.

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CHAPTER 1.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRUGGLE. [1.]

Of all the elections in New Zealand's political history, only two qualify for the adjective momentous. In 1890 and in 1935, Governments came to power whose vigour and liberalism were not only to alter the lives of their contemporaries, but also to make changes that had continual repercussions in this country and echoes in other nations' handling of social problems.

The Liberal and Labour Governments followed on after the collapse of regimes which were predominantly Conservative, and which were dogged in their last years by trying economic conditions and precarious political rearrangements. Neither regime was memorable for enlightened legislation and no leader had the personal popularity of the leading figures in the succeeding Cabinets - Seddon and Savage. Other Governments had fallen victims to depression crises, had been jostled out by a multiplicity of vote - splitting candidates and had alienated

1. In addition to the texts mentioned in the footnotes, background reading was obtained from the following:

Belshaw (ed.):	"New Zealand."
Cambridge:	History of the British Empire, Vol. VII, Part II, "New Zealand".
Morrell:	"Britain and New Zealand".
Mulgan:	"From Track to Highway".
	"Round Table", 1928-1935.
Soljak:	"New Zealand".
Wood:	"Understanding New Zealand".

their habitual supporters, but no government had aroused against itself such general opposition as did the Coalition of 1931-5. The Labour Party might claim the election victory as their own triumph but this was not acknowledging how much momentum they had gained from the efforts of those intent only on pushing out the Coalition.

The National Government had been the unhappy result of minority groupings in the House and of unprecedented financial problems, which neither of the two experienced parties felt capable of solving alone. The political difficulties had appeared even before the economic ones, and it will be necessary to review briefly the period up to the onset of the depression in 1931.

After their period in power from 1890 to 1912 the Liberals suffered eclipse just as their British counterparts did. Brief returns to Government benches were made by Liberal leaders during the War Coalition, but the Reform Party continued in power until 1928. During the twenty-six years of this administration, the Liberals had the position of official Opposition but in latter years it was the Labour Party, then in adolescent growth, which took the lead in criticism.

In 1928 there was an unexpected rejuvenation of the ageing Liberal Party. Under a new name, "United", and with the infusion of Independent blood, it was able to take office again. This position came about because of the Reform and Liberal

parties' refusal to sink their minor differences and unite, as often urged by newspapers and other publications. There was, however, sufficient difference between the two older parties to cause Labour to prefer to give its support to United when it held the balance between them. Labour liked neither of their intended programmes but liked Reform's least.

The United Party's precarious balancing act could only be successful while Sir Joseph Ward was the chief performer. [1.] But he had not long to live and the leadership went to G. W. Forbes, [2.] who had neither the personality nor popularity of his old chief. At the election on the death of Ward and at others later, there was a definite disavowal by the two chief parties of any intention of uniting. It was certainly not in the interests of Reform to team up with the failing Liberal remnants.

The Labour Party, too, were waiting to step into the dying man's shoes. They were bitterly disappointed at the turn of economic events which necessitated a Reform-United fusion in 1931. The pressure of the world crises forced both of these parties to the panicky conclusion that the situation was too

1. "The surprise victory at the general election in November, 1928, which brought Sir Joseph Ward into office was unmistakably a one-man victory." "Round Table", No.79, p.658.
2. "Though representing an obscure country electorate the Premiership went to Mr. George Forbes - a man without vision, personality or dynamics". A. J. Stallworthy, in a letter to the writer.

difficult to tackle alone. Before the election in that year, each party agreed to go under its own leadership to the polls, but gave assurances that sitting members would not be subjected to opposition from the other party. The result of this arrangement was a Coalition Government, from which Labour was excluded by its own refusal to participate. Having twenty-four Labour politicians on the sidelines, aggressively confident that they could do better, made the Coalition team most uneasy, but the political difficulties of governing during a depression were trifling beside the economic problems.

The depression began for New Zealand when prices for wool, butter and meat fell between 1930 and 1931, bringing many farmers to the verge of bankruptcy. The effect of this was quickly passed on to others in the community. Unemployment increased, diminishing spending power and leading to further dismissals. For a time some unemployed men were absorbed into public works, but unfortunately these soon had to be contracted[1.] because the Government decided to economise. Lowered incomes had caused a diminution of revenue just when greater State expenditure was expected of the Coalition. That the victims of the depression should look for help from public funds was natural in a people nurtured by the optimism of Vogel and the Seddonian social service, but these were not days of boom and borrow. This was a depression. Even if it had been possible to borrow from London, it would have been inadvisable while export prices were so low. If the Government had wished to borrow internally

1. Sutch, "Poverty and Progress in New Zealand", p.133.

it would have had to adopt the policy of guaranteeing productive and economic work at proper wages to keep up spending power and stimulate a greater demand for goods to ensure continued and increasing work for people and a surplus available for National loans.

But this was not the policy adopted. The Finance Minister [1.] was determined to have a balanced Budget, so that Mr. Coates, Minister of Unemployment, had to match cuts in pensions and civil servants' salaries with reduction of public works expenditure.

One solution of the Government's shortage of funds was to relieve the farmers sufficiently to enable them to contribute again to the Treasury. Nothing could be done about the overseas prices for primary products, which showed no improvement until 1934. Internally, however, farm costs could be lowered. To this end a stay on farm debts was declared, by various Acts ending with the Rural Mortgagors Final Adjustment Act, 1935. Other palliatives were statutory reductions of interest rates and rents and finally the raising of the exchange rate in January 1933 - measures which embittered the business community. [2.]

1. William Downie Stewart (Dunedin West).
2. A. J. Stallworthy, M.P. for the Eden electorate in Auckland City, 1928 to 1935, is their spokesman when he says (in a letter to the writer 24-7-48), "Mortgages, Govt. stocks, interest rates and financial obligations and contracts were ruthlessly assailed in the most arbitrary manner by the Government, which should have been the keeper of the nation's conscience."

Yet their grievances did not go unnoticed. While the Government continued to reduce its own expenditure, it approved lowered wage costs for industry, but concealed among the jam was the medicine of sales tax - a source of irritation to the consumer and so a limitation on profits for the businessman.

Whereas farmers and businessmen expected to struggle on until times were better, the working-class, and especially the urban worker, was not so self-reliant. He had no financial backing and generally no surplus or reserve funds. He looked to the Government for protection, but was answered by wage-reduction when the Arbitration Act was amended. This was done in response to a demand by the farmer. Arbitration Court awards had not yet been extended to the farm-worker but "there were awards for shearers, freezing-works employees and some others and the farmers claimed that the cost of distributing services, of farm supplies, and of Government were affected by the determinations of the Court." [1] Their demands were successful and revision of private wage contracts followed. The business community did not now hasten to uphold the "sanctity of contract". The unions, which did, [2] had no strength or resources to fight with and the working-class man preferred reduced wages to strikes at a time when he could soon be replaced from the ranks of the unemployed.

If he lost his job, the best he could hope for was part-time employment on Public Works schemes or relief work, probably

1. Morrell, "New Zealand", p. 181.
2. Beaglehole, "New Zealand", p.101.

having to go away from his home to earn the meagre allowance. He might go as subsidized labour to a farmer, or be assisted to prospect for gold, but if he was unfit for vigorous work, or was one of the thousands for whom, by 1933, there was nothing to do even in relief work, the Government's principle of "No pay without work" forced him to seek charity from hard-pressed city authorities whose inadequacies were mitigated by private generosity. The situation was unpleasant enough for men, but particularly galling for women workers, for they were not eligible for State assistance and yet, while earning, had to pay unemployment tax.

Early in 1932, dissatisfaction among the unemployed had showed itself in riots in Auckland.[1] Although this resulted in an increase in allowances, it was not till 1934 that the principle of "No pay without work" was relinquished, and sustenance was given to all those who needed it. Even then there were needy people, noted by Sutch,[2] "who had not registered for relief because of pride or a pauper income."

So widespread was the suffering and dissatisfaction that despite the Coalition's well-intentioned efforts to reduce the economic chaos, their popularity was at its lowest ebb in 1933 and scarcely recovered any ground before the election.

1. Harrop in "New Zealand After Five Wars", p.94, thought it "incredible that better ways of employing available labour could not have been devised."
2. Sutch, "The Quest for Security in New Zealand", p.121.

1933 was the year of the ~~Foreign~~ Legion's mushroom growth - a spontaneous movement to influence Parliamentary representation, but with no political affiliations and no sense of direction. By this time too, many farmers had become easy converts to "economic heresies". After the shock of seeing their incomes dwindle away, they had plunged into controversial deeps with Major Douglas. Their demand for monetary reform was "so insistent" [1] that the Cabinet sought relief in a Parliamentary Monetary Committee. The squall of publicity connected with this controversy and the widely-read Parliamentary reports prepared the way for the farmers' progress from Social Credit to acceptance of Labour's programme.

By the end of its extended term, [2] the Coalition had offended most sections of the people in varying degrees. The farmers now had the least to complain of but they were disappointed at having to accept quota restrictions on meat exports to British markets and had been incited to disloyalty by monetary reformers. Certain of the farmers, moreover, felt little gratitude for the alteration to the exchange rate, which came too late to help, the benefits going to the stock-and-station agents who had been financing them. [3]

1. J. H. Penniket, in a letter to the writer 3-7-49, states that "every electorate in the south of Auckland had several branches of monetary reformers actively campaigning". See also Beaglehole, "New Zealand", p.103.
2. The period of office was extended by one year ostensibly as a measure of economy but more probably to allow the country to recover from the despairing anger of 1933.
3. Penniket, loc. cit., recalls the case of a returned soldier farmer on a budget from a stock company. "His wife and family were allowed fifteen shillings a week on which to live... and the only fresh meat they got was eels and rabbits caught on the farm, yet there were about 800 sheep on that farm and some cattle, but of course they were all secured to the stock company". Morrell in "Contemporary Review", 1936, p.335, mentions similar grievances.

Many city people, ill-acquainted with the problems of the depressed export trade in primary produce, complained of the Government's preoccupation with Meat Boards, exchange rate, Dairy Commissions and Imperial tariff revisions. Risking its political life by faithfully keeping New Zealand's exports of beef down to the quota set by the British Government, the New Zealand Government was often betrayed by abrupt changes of policy in Britain and by blundering advice from the Meat Board here.

Some of the criticisms were only surface swirls of petulance, which disappeared with the return of prosperity, but beneath these flowed through the whole country a current of resentment at the social results of the Government's administration - seen in the malnutrition of children and the treatment of unemployed. By London standards the depression measures had been successful in that the New Zealand Government had put its financial house in order, but New Zealand opinion held that it was the work of visionless men to end their critical period of office with a surplus in the unemployment fund when there were still over 50,000 [1.] men out of work. It appeared that the Government was more concerned to keep financial institutions solvent than to look after the general welfare of the people.

The election had been delayed long enough for economic recovery to be quite apparent; it was found possible in August, 1935, to restore cuts in civil servants' wages, in widows' and war veterans' pensions. Yet for every person who might feel

1. Figures taken from graph p.153 of "Contemporary New Zealand". by N.Z.I.I.A.

grateful, there were many to echo the Labour politicians' claim that recovery was in spite of the present Government, not because of it. No relief came for the family-man wage-earner who found it very difficult on reduced income to meet the increased demand of indirect taxes. Even acknowledging the unprecedented severity of the depression, and the excusable inadequacy of the men who had to grapple with it, many people were convinced that more should have been done to reduce the poverty in the midst of plenty. It was this spirit that Condliffe interpreted when in 1930 he commented that, "If New Zealanders can be said to have any social or economic theories, pride of place must undoubtedly be given to the general theory that human considerations should take precedence of economic progress, or perhaps that true economic progress can in the long run be based only upon human welfare".[1.]

1. J. B. Condliffe, "New Zealand in the Making", p.364.

THE PARTIES; THEIR ORGANISATION AND FINANCE.

The National Coalition did not expect to maintain themselves as the Government without a life-and-death struggle. In addition to the unfailing opposition from the Labour Party, there was no lack of evidence of a changed political atmosphere in the country even before the Democrat Party was conjured up by a political genie.

In 1930, Sir Francis Bell had predicted[1] a Labour Victory when a drop in farm prices should reduce farmers to a "hopeless" state. If this did not happen in 1931, it was only because farmers did not yet have any more to hope for from Labour than from Reform. Their despondency found expression, nevertheless, in an unusual number of votes for Independent candidates in rural districts. Next they turned towards the Social Credit monetary reformers, who were actively working through the Auckland branches of the Farmers' Union. These disciples of Major Douglas set out to educate the people in the elementary principles of currency and banking. It was their insistence that forced the Government to set up a Parliamentary Committee to examine and report upon the Dominion's monetary system. The two reports (a majority and minority one) were widely read.[2]

1. In a letter to Downie Stewart, quoted by Lipson in "The Politics of Equality", p.228.
2. "No State paper in New Zealand ever had a more successful circulation". Beaglehole, "New Zealand", p.114. For Reports see Appendix to P.D., 1934-5, B.3.

It was not only the farmers who gave active expression to their resentment; "public servants were producing schemes of finances alternative to wage-reduction". [1] Community cells were enlarging, swollen with bitter unemployed people. 1933 was the year of the Legion's first appearance: a movement with vague hopes that a better type of candidate might be found, but itself preferring not to be embroiled in the unpleasantness of politics. "It undoubtedly attracted the support of many young men, of the professional classes, for example...." [2] It was an organisation of "the extreme Right" according to the Socialist "Tomorrow". [3] Since it disclaimed any connection with political parties, it cannot be said to have contributed to the rise of the Labour Party, nor the fate of the Coalition, but it seems likely that followers of the Legion were a protest group against the Government and would be attracted to the many Independents rather than to any party since they had debounced sectional interests, professing to be "simply one big organisation for the common good." [4]

There were numerous more vociferous critics ranging from "pink papers" to political pamphleteers but one most effective protest came from a group of Church dignitaries. There had been many complaints by clergymen of the desperate state of the poorer families and especially of the malnutrition suffered by children, which had not been alleviated even in the fourth year of depression. Some Auckland clergymen organised a mass meeting "at which

1. ibid., p.103.
2. Morrell: "New Zealand", p.231.
3. "Tomorrow", July 31st, 1935. It was noted that the Legion's journal had the short life of only a fortnight in 1934.
4. Morrell: "New Zealand", p.231.

Archbishop Averill, the Primate of the Anglican church in New Zealand, put to the audience a resolution calling upon the National Government to resign". [1.] So the Coalition had come within a few months of the election and was still unable to show sufficiently effective progress to win back some of its most important former supporters.

Such protests, nevertheless, did not constitute opposition. That had to come from organised groups able to blend the varied complaints into firm resistance. Of the political organisations contesting the 1935 election, only three were large enough to be called parties - National, Labour and Democrats. Often the lesser candidates were praised for their personal qualities but rejected for lack of adequate backing. An Auckland observer [2.] considered that H. M. Rushworth was preferred in the Bay of Islands for his personal qualifications rather than for his Country Party affiliations, but even the latter were acceptable since for election purposes the Country Party "is an ally of Labour". [3.] But of F. W. Doidge it was said that, with his distinctive personality and ability proven abroad (as a journalist), he "would have had excellent prospects of election had he allied himself with a major party". [4.]

1. R.F. Paddock in an article in "Political Quarterly", April, 1936, p.260. This resolution was discussed in the House: see P.D. Vol. 242, p.363, and more evidence offered by Howard (Lab.) p.376, that many Christchurch school children had no shoes to wear and were under-nourished.
2. "Auckland Star", November 22nd, 1935.
3. ibid. This definition could not have been accepted by the Labour Party. Labour candidates opposed the Country Party in Tauranga and Waikato, successfully. Probably it was Rushworth's strong following which gave him immunity from Labour opposition.
4. ibid.

Without either of these aids - impressive personal qualities and strong party backing, the minor groups had little place in the struggle. Only the Democrat Party seemed to have any chance of challenging the Nationalists or Labour, and was equally reviled by both.

THE NATIONAL PARTY:

The Coalition was being considered as one party even before its amalgamation as the National Political Federation was announced. They differed very little in policy but by their rivalry brought government to a dangerous state of paralysis, with Labour advanced to the key position of holding the balance between them. The depression made it imperative to put an end to political stalemate, but it also made it impossible for either party to retain any individuality. Neither could be absolved from the share it had had in measures to restore economic balance. When the adjective "reactionary" was thrown it stuck to Liberals as well as Reformers, just as the term "socialists" was equally mis-applied to both. They could not return to the former divisions but made no move to resolve the topsy-turvy situation in which the leaders found themselves.

Forbes, who stood to increase the Liberals' popularity by removing them from the connection with Coates, could not stand alone. His abilities were admitted by all to be mediocre, though he was personally more popular than Coates. The Finance Minister, moreover, could not hope to win the confidence of the

country if he presented himself as a potential Prime Minister. He had already outworn his welcome with most of the voters of 1931, but could scarcely be rejected if Forbes continued to work with him.

This unsatisfactory state was brought to an end in May, 1935. They reached an understanding and announced [1.] a new organisation - the National Political Federation, their candidates to be known as Nationalists. There were only six months left in which to regain for the Nationalists the support that the Coalition had lost. It was decided to employ clerical staff and build up the non-parliamentary side of their organisation but "little was done in that direction". [2.]

Because both parties had disbanded their respective organisations when they combined in 1931, the new organisers were hampered by a lack of a central office and workers. Though they felt handicapped, they were apparently too active for the Democrat leader's peace of mind. T.C.A. Hislop complained [3.] that he was being followed by satellites of the Government sent to report to their masters on the advance of the Democrat Party. He referred also to the Coalition members' having to act as their own organisers in the preceeding months and stated that a member of the Legislative Council, the Hon. F. Waite, was an organiser too.

1. In Dominion newspapers on May 13th, 1935.
2. See bulletin written for the 1946 election, reviewing National party history. According to the "New Zealand Herald", October 17th, 1935, a nucleus of a Dominion Executive was formed at the Party Conference, then just concluded, and provincial organisations were left to add others.
3. "New Zealand Herald", September 21st, 1935.

The complete absence of contact with the electorate through voluntary workers made the National candidates' work difficult in comparison with the steady work carried on in constituencies by Labour Volunteers. [1] An additional handicap was the inability to announce any sort of policy to counteract the effect of persistent campaigning about guaranteed prices and increased State services. Apart from a few secessions - notably W. Downie Stewart's - the survivors of the Reform and Liberal parties had been welded by the heat of depression battles into a solidly anti-Labour corps, resentful of Labour's refusal to join a National Government. A union had been achieved to fight the better against Labour, but the National Political Federation was not the real National Party. This was not formed until 1936, when there was a conference of the Nationalists and all those of other parties opposed to Socialism. [2]

Unfortunately for the Nationalists, though they knew positively what they were opposed to, they had not done much clear thinking about what they proposed to do. Lack of a dynamic programme was their most severe drawback. Throughout the depression and at the election, and afterwards it proved very difficult to go one better than Labour.

1. Probably this also was in Forbes's mind when he complained the day before Parliament was dissolved that while "we are wasting time talking to one another, the Democrats are talking to our voters". "New Zealand Herald", October 5th, 1935.
2. "Press", June 16, 1936, and according to a bulletin issued by the Head Office of the National Party reviewing the political situation, 1935-1946.

THE LABOUR PARTY:

The Labour Party might well have come to power in New Zealand within a decade of 1935, even if there had been no depression to hasten the change-over. From its inception in 1916 as a contestant for Parliamentary seats, Labour candidates made steady progress in capturing city electorates while several veterans held rural seats. If the Reform and United groups had continued to oppose one another, the weight of urban numbers leaning towards Labour might soon have tipped the balance in their favour. Further, had the conservative party remained in power in 1935, it is conceivable that there might have been a swing towards Labour for no better reason than that of boredom with familiar faces and a desire to see what the other side could do.

However, the Labour victory was more than a reflection of the Nationalists' defeat. By 1935 it was the most effective political organisation in the country. In its constant activities in the electorates it showed some of the characteristics of a British political party, not because of the need to prepare against a sudden dissolution, but because, without constant collections from socials, dances, card evenings or jumble sales, they could not be ready to fight the General Election every three years.

Party organisation was then very similar to the present system except that there were fewer Labour Party Branches, with fewer members and fewer Unions affiliated, with smaller union membership. [1.]

1. This information, and that following concerning organisation, was told to the writer by Mr. G. Dell, member of the Christchurch South Branch of the Labour Party in 1935, and since.

The structure dates back to 1919. Several branches would be grouped under one Labour Representation Committee, which managed the Labour contests for municipal elections and assisted financially with General Elections - if they had money to spare. There were no paid organisers for either Representation Committees or Branches. The Labour Party was built up on the enthusiasm of the voluntary workers in each electorate. Before elections, each branch member willing to assist was made responsible for a portion of an electorate, calling at homes to ensure that electors were on the roll, delivering literature and organising collections of money. In Whangarei the first contributions for election year came from the annual Labour Party picnic which was described [1.] as a great success - presumably from a financial point of view.

Preparations had been going on from 1934 for the main electoral effort. Plans were made for tours of the constituencies during February, 1935, by the party leader. Until the depression showed that it might be possible to catch discontented farmers on the rebound, Labour energies had been concentrated on urban areas. The work of capturing rural electorates, often without branches or with ones still barely established, had to be done from the cities generally. Members of Parliament or prominent Labour Party members would address meetings and arrange for advertising and distribution of pamphlets. For months prior to the election all Labour members of Parliament were actively expounding the party line throughout New Zealand in their

1. Labour Party's Annual Conference Report, 1936.

weekend excursions away from Wellington. This early start, together with "the enthusiasm with which all candidates entered the contest" [1] was considered to have had a large part in determining the favourable results in many newly-won electorates. Underlying it all were the united efforts, spread over many years, of the industrial and political organisations which constituted the Labour movement. Unlike the rusty political organisation of the National Party, the Labour machine was in excellent condition and had only to be accelerated without the delay of changing gears that hindered their opponents.

THE DEMOCRAT PARTY:

In New Zealand, the Democrat Party did not stand in relation to the main parties as the Liberals have done in England in recent years. There the Liberals have hung on to their small representation and maintained some prominent men in Parliament with an unspectacular middle-way policy. The Democrats here were given all the courtesies due to a major third party by the Press, the opposing politicians, and the Broadcasting Corporation but they could not boast of a long history. They were a mushroom growth with a life of a little more than a year. Though they found fifty-three candidates for the election, only four had had previous Parliamentary experience.

The defects that most prejudiced their chances of election were the sudden onslaught they made on politics and the surprise nature of their policy. It would have been better to have

1. ibid.

worked up gradually from small beginnings, with a few well-established members paving the way for a more generous representation later. The policy was a matter of some difficulty; no middle-way programme was suitable; half measures could never satisfy in face of the Labour programme, so this difficult situation was not resolved until September, the third month before the elections and a year since the new party's inception.

The long silence was not due to inactivity on the part of the Democrat organiser. This was A. E. Davy, who was as much a target for vilification by the Democrats' opponents as was the leader, Hislop. In announcing the new party in 1934, the "Evening Post" [1.] recalled that Davy had been the organiser for the Reform party at the last election and quoted him as saying that his quarrel was not with the persons of the Government but with their economic advisers whose "socialism" had evoked his resignation. Even earlier he had been responsible for the successful campaign which had retrieved the fortune of the Liberals under a new name "United". This readiness of Davy to put himself at the service of rival parties like a mercenary soldier of pre-Napoleonic days earned for him a certain notoriety.

The origin and development of the Democrat Party was likened to machine politics of the United States of America. [2.] C. R. Petrie, the Labour candidate for Hauraki, expressed surprise that a distinguishing mark of a Davy campaign, the slogan, was missing. He suggested "New Foes with Old Faces." [3.]

1. September 29th, 1934.
2. Davy mentioned in conversation with the writer that he got his propaganda ideas from America.
3. Quoted by "New Zealand Herald", November 1st, 1935.

Such censures came from all sides. It was common opinion that the party was the expression of the dissatisfaction of certain wealthy men who resented the increased taxation of depression economy. One such critic, Sir Alexander Herdman, had himself been included in the earliest negotiations, but had withdrawn as the clash of rival interests within the party created new difficulties. Though Davy had been active through the Dominion, engaging organisers and opening offices, because of differences of opinion with his Auckland employers he was not able to announce a leader until August, 1935. This deficiency had been noted by the "Mercantile Gazette": "In our opinion and in absence of any publicity as to the party and its programme, the Democrats will not effect the real contest" [1].

If the mainspring of the party till then had been Davy, the originator was W. Goodfellow, prominent in the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company and in the Auckland Farmers' Union, who planned to secure a small party of elected members, "sufficient to hold the balance of power in the House" [2]. Instead of ten or twelve men, Davy found fifty-three. That he exceeded his instructions is revealed by subsequent Press notices [3] of court proceedings when Goodfellow attempted to cancel the five-year term of engagement with Davy and to reclaim from him

1. Aug. 1st, 1935, p.921. The "Mercantile Gazette" was an unwavering supporter of the Government.
2. J. Caughley in a letter, 12-6-48, to the writer. Caughley, Democrat candidate for Kaipara, was once Director of Education in New Zealand.
3. "New Zealand Herald", October 19th, 1935.

£1145 16 8 paid as salary. The fault may not have been all on Davy's side. A Democrat candidate [1] gave a hint about the reason for Goodfellow's withdrawal when he asserted that "no honest party could consider making the concessions that powerful vested interests demanded in return for their support".

The withdrawal of Goodfellow before the party conference on August 21st followed on the rejection of Doidge, his nominee for the party's presidency. Auckland supporters of Sir Alexander Herdman were also defeated and he too went his Independent way. Although there were three men at the conference with Parliamentary experience and two of these were ex-Ministers (A.J. Stallworthy and J.B. Donald) it was Davy's candidate, T.C.A. Hislop, Mayor of Wellington, but unknown in national politics, who was elected party leader.

Throughout this sparring period, provincial organisers had been at work setting up committees which found candidates and agents. Collecting funds was not their province; [2] it was handled by the central organisers. In each electorate canvassers were selected to approach electors, to discuss issues and make reports. Some of these workers were paid, but most were volunteers. They could have been of little help to the candidates until the policy announcement of October 1st gave them something to discuss with electors.

The Democrats were at a disadvantage as the Labour and National Parties' policies were already familiar to the public in

1. H.T. Thornley (Manukau) quoted in "N.Z.H.", November, 6th, 1935
2. This information came from Davy, in conversation with the writer, September 1st, 1948.

essence, if not in detail. While they hovered in indecision, the nation was making up its mind that the issue lay between Labour and Nationalists. The press encouraged this view, so that the Democrat intervention became an "Aunt Sally" with entertainment value only, while the heaviest ammunition was reserved for the more serious targets. Despite their many handicaps no one in the Democrats was prepared for total failure. Not even the leader, not the deputy-leader, W.A. Veitch, gained a seat. Many of them lost financially, too, having to forfeit the £10 deposit. [1.]

Although the Nationalist, Labour and Democrat candidates account for only 200 of the 265 candidates, the small groupings were generally ignored by the press and given scant attention by their opponents. Their insignificance gave rise to claims of affiliation with one of the larger parties, sometimes officially or through some mis-informed supporter or commentator.

It may have been true as was [2.] claimed that there were many inarticulate Liberals throughout the country, though the results justified the remark in the press correspondence columns [3.] that, Liberalism being quite dead, it was useless to support McLachlan (Nat.Lib.) or any other Liberal candidate. There was a party with five candidates to expound a platform

1. 32 of the 56 Democrats lost their deposits, i.e. 57%, the same proportion as the Independents who suffered.
2. Quoted by a correspondent in "Press", November 20th, 1935.
3. "Press", November 25th.

avoiding the "opposite extremes of Reform and Labour" [1]. In Auckland their name was linked with the Nationalists but in Christchurch, where no Liberal candidates could be found, the branch expressed agreement [2] with the Democrats whom they had decided to support. Yet there was no agreement elsewhere between Liberals and Democrats, who both put up candidates in the Waitemata, Roskill, Wanganui and Invercargill electorates. Nevertheless, the Democrats found it useful to acknowledge the connection, even though it was with such an obscure section of a dying party.

It was not in the interests of the Labour party to have their name linked with another minor group, as the Communists tried to persuade them to do. The matter was brought up at the Easter Conference of the Labour Party and, receiving no reply to their letter, the Communist Party, approaching them in August, again by letter, [3] only to be rebuffed for their past antagonism to the Labour Party and its policy. Considering the unpopularity of Communism with the majority of the vital electors - that is, the farmers and the middle-class city people - the Labour Party did well to avoid any recrudescence of the "Red Fed" label. Memories of the militant unionism of 1913 were best avoided, as were any connections with the party that was blamed for inciting

1. "New Zealand Herald", September 30th.
2. "Press", October 12th, 1935.
3. The letter and the ensuing correspondence were reprinted in the "Workers' Weekly", August 24th, 1935. The Communist proposal was for the two parties to form a joint organisation and programme, the Communist Party offering to withdraw its candidates in constituencies where Labour was standing.

the unemployed men to riot in Auckland in April, 1932.[1] Moreover, as the main support of the Communist Party came from the unemployed workers' union, there could be no financial gain for Labour funds by any temporary union.

Both the Labour and the Communist parties found the expense of the election a great strain on rather meagre resources. It was fortunate for all parties concerned that there had been so few by-elections. Although an extra year had been added to the life of the twenty-fourth Parliament, there had been only five by-elections in four years[2]. Not even the National party with its more well-to-do supporters, could have found it easy to finance an election after years of low prices and slow recovery.

It is not easy to make comparisons between the financial situation of one party and another. The subject is not one that political censors would approve for universal exhibition. There is usually reluctance to refer to it, unless to discredit the opposition's arrangements. In ordinary circumstances such use might be a two-edged weapon, inviting retaliatory disclosures. It so happened in 1935 that the Labour party was making a feature of its financial situation as a way of gaining sympathy for the Cinderella of politics.

Davy did not touch the "small stuff" as he called the penny-a-week contributions to the Labour Party funds, but canvassed

1. Also riots in Dunedin, April 8th and Wellington, May 10th. See "Press", April 9th and May 12th, 1932.
2. Year Book, 1936, p.692.

the big firms, starting with those likely to give thousands of pounds and working down to £100. If this was an accurate account of Democrat methods it would also be so for the Nationalists, whose supporters were in the same economic class.

Another possible source of income is mentioned by Stallworthy, an ex-Minister of the United Government, when he alleged[1.] that a Legislative Councillor was given Ministerial rank partly because he had "collected considerable party funds". Whether this explanation of the appointment of an unpopular colleague is reliable or not, it suggests a likely method of adding to political funds. An influential man would be welcome in any party.

Almost invariably the members of Parliament had to have another source of income besides their salary of £364 10 0, which scarcely covered living costs, travelling and electoral expenses. Absence from home was an obstacle to successful business or professional careers. This difficulty accounts for the predominance of the farmers in the National Party and of the union secretary in the Labour Party. In their own electorates, candidates kept down expense by holding street-corner meetings, while their organisers and agents were trying in numerous ways to get contributions from the public.

Perhaps because they were having such a struggle to get funds, having to take up collections at meetings and be content with modest demands, Labour candidates made much of F. Langstone's

1. In a letter to the writer, 24-7-48.

attack [1] on the Reform Party by reading at an electoral meeting a copy of a circular addressed to farmers in December 1933. It urged farmers to help place the party finances in a sound condition, reminding them that the Labour Party, which was extraordinarily well organised, made a levy on its supporters. After reference to the 25% exchange benefit obtained for them at the Reform Party's insistence, the letter concluded: "Are you going to let them (the Labour Party) occupy Government benches and impose legislation which may soon ruin you, simply because you refused to support your own party?" Attached to the letter was a form on which farmers could pledge themselves to a donation equal to 1% of wool and stock sales for the current season.

There is no difference in principle between this appeal and the Labour Party's collections through Trade Unions, except that in the Coalition's case it was an account for services rendered. The Labour candidates chose, however, to take up attitudes of righteous indignation. They complained in circular letters [2] that whereas their own supporters were not wealthy, "money was being poured out like water" by the Press, the large landowners and the banks to help their opponents. Their own contributions came from local party branches, [3] from Representation Committees' membership fees and capitation dues and individual sums. This money was all received by the Head Office and

1. "Evening Post" July 4th, 1935. Davy hailed this disclosure as "embarrassing" in retailing it in the Democrat "Handbook" for the benefit of candidates.
2. See copy in Appendix. C.II.
3. These were acknowledged weekly in "Standard". For a typical extract see Appendix C.III.

held in trust for particular electorates.

An appeal had been made early in 1935 for £5000 for a National Campaign Fund. By the end of November it was not fully subscribed, so was not closed until April of the following year. There was another fund for national publicity and advertising, for which £700 was obtained, but over £1000 was spent on newspaper advertisements, theatre slides, magazine advertisements and pamphlets [1]. The pamphlet on guaranteed prices (to be sent to every farmer in the district) was offered [2]. free of charge to candidates on condition that the cost of householder postage be refunded to the National Headquarters.

In spite to the Labour Party's office records being incomplete owing to the pressure of work at the time of the campaign there is ample evidence of the careful planning and attention to detail that characterized the party's determined courting of electorates. Lack of resources and authoritative position were offset by enthusiasm and skilful appeal to the voter. Lack of money was capitalized as a virtue - Labour was a Cinderella sharing the people's poverty.

No other party was so well placed for the struggle. The National Party had experience but could not point to inspired achievements and was not well prepared for a defensive war.

1. Annual Financial Report and Balance Sheet of the Labour Party 1936. Comparisons were made with expenditure of other years: in 1934 £48 was spent on postage whereas in 1935 the cost of postage was £226.
2. In a circular letter dated 18-11-35, seen at the Labour Party's Head Office, Wellington.

The Democrats had energetic leadership but their strength was dissipated. The early quarrels had made them all somewhat suspect of jockeying for position. It was damning to have three candidates and the originator of the party retire after disagreements. The remaining candidates had to start from scratch in most cases and were delayed by lack of definite instructions until the policy was hammered out by their leaders. Members of the lesser groups and Independents had each to prove his own worth with no external aids. National and Labour candidates might quite well be returned by the place of the party as a whole in the esteem of the voter, whereas the Independent and other minor groups had little more to offer than personality and individual worth. It was possible for the party to carry passengers but the lesser contestants had to fight on their own merits and often deserved, as men, rewards that went to parties.

THE CANDIDATES.

Members of the retiring Parliament had not been a characteristic section of the people they represented. The predominance of farmer members in this Parliament might have been suitable in view of the supremacy of primary produce in the national wealth but it was not a proper representation of national interests. The farming ascendancy had been artificially created by a constitutional device, the country quota[1.] - at the expense of urban electorates. If the Coalition members had been evenly distributed between urban and rural electorates, it would have been less important that many of them were farmers, but since they held only eight of the thirty-two urban seats, it was the complaint of the town-dweller that his interests had been subordinated to those of the farmer. An additional injustice resulted from the lag between census disclosures and electoral boundary re-adjustments. Between the 1927 Electoral Act and the 1935 elections no allowance could be made for the considerable urbanisation which had taken place.[2.]

Criticisms of this situation were raised mainly by Labour supporters and were actuated by party jealousy, not by

1. In rural areas five miles outside the chief post offices of the four main cities of New Zealand every 100 electors was reckoned at 128, making a 28% increase in their representation. See Year Book, 1945, p.11. In 1935 the effect was to give rural electors four additional representatives according to Hon. W. McIntyre; see P.D. Vol. 242, p.335. See also Lipson, "Politics of Equality", pp. 174-185 for a full discussion of the effect of the country quota on representation.
2. See Year Book p.23 and Lipson, op.cit., p.178.

a dislike of the farmer as a Parliamentary representative. Indeed, many of the urban electors have close connection with rural life and are not oblivious to farmers' needs. Their complaints were seldom directed against persons. There is little evidence that New Zealand elections are marred by abusive personal attacks on politicians, such as have to be endured in United States. This is partly due to the superior quality of the majority of newspaper reporting and comments from which comes most of the information about candidates. Since New Zealanders have received most of their commentaries on politics from the daily newspaper, the influence of such a gossipy little journal as the "Critic" [1] would have had a negligible effect upon electors.

When one considers the candidates in this 1935 election as a whole, the first significant fact to emerge is that there were an unusually large number of them.

NUMBER OF CANDIDATES: TABLE 1.

	1925	1928	1931	1935	1938
Whites	190	193	189	246	160
Maoris	13	19	14	19	16
	203	212	203	265	176

Only in 1943 was there greater competition, when 268 candidates appeared. [2] The desperate conditions of depression years must have encouraged many to think that they could do

1. Published weekly in Wellington between 10-7-34 and 6-2-36.
2. Lipson, op. cit., p.235.

better than the Government in managing the country's affairs. Closely-contested elections not only have a multiplicity of candidates but also have no uncontested seats. Part of the explanation for the smaller number of contestants at the three previous elections lay in the existence of several uncontested seats on each occasion. In 1931, there were four. In 1935 there was a surfeit of candidates in some electorates, making for confusion in the minds of electors.

Some retiring members had an embarrassing galaxy of five or six opponents for their seat. In Wellington East there were six candidates - one each for the National, Labour, Democrat and Communist Parties and two Independents. It was Northern Maori which led with seven contestants - a Nationalist, a Ratana, a Democrat and four Independents. It was explained[1.] that this is not uncommon; Maoris appear at elections as unofficial candidates for various parties, never having been heard of before by the members of the party concerned, and after defeat are not heard of again in politics. Their enthusiasm for debate is not matched by persistence in the political field.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF CANDIDATES PER SEAT.

Electorates:	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total Seats
White	15	35	20	5	1	-	76
Maori	1	1	1	-	-	1	4
							80

1. By the National Secretary of the New Zealand Labour Party in an interview with the writer.

Of the 80 electorates only 15 had a simple contest between two candidates. In most of the others there were close contests between three and four candidates. This is not unusual as reference to Table 1 shows. Though Maori seats generally have four candidates offering, the pakeha contests are only between two on the average in the normal years.

One indication of the unusual interest aroused in this election is the great number of Independents presenting themselves. Lack of Party backing should deter even the most enthusiastic political amateur but in the 1935 total of 42 Independents were many who had not contested an election before. In previous years their numbers had varied from 16 in 1925 to 25 in 1931. To account for the great increase in Independents one observer [1.] advanced the explanation that "selection of weak official candidates brings into the field many Independents".

With only 37 of the retiring members of the National party standing again for election, almost half the candidates were politically inexperienced but they were not necessarily weak and the calibre of the National candidates does not appear to have influenced the decisions of many Independents to present themselves for election. Twenty-one of them pitted their strength against Labour and National candidates who won, in most cases with safe majorities. Eleven more Independents opposed men who received a large share in voting totals but

1. Editorial comment in the "Press", Christchurch, May 13th.

because of the split votes, were not returned. It seems likely that the calibre of the individual candidate in this election was of less importance than the attractiveness of the policy he supported.

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF CANDIDATES PRESENTED BY EACH PARTY.

	Nat.	Lab.	Dem.	Ind.	Lib.	Nat-Lib.	Ind. Lab.	Com.	Soc.	C.P.	Ratana	TOTAL
White	70	70	53	36	5	1	3	3	3	3	-	246
Maori	4	2	3	6	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	19
	74	72	56	42	5	1	5	3	3	3	2	265

Naturally the organised parties accounted for the greatest part of the 265 candidates. Apart from a few of the large bloc of Independents and two each from the Ratana and Country Parties, the dwindling tail of Communists, Socialists, Liberals and unofficial National and Labour candidates affected the fortunes of the main parties very little. Among these were the candidates who received the lowest numbers of votes; Kennedy (Ind.) 28, was the lowest and the next were a Socialist, a Communist and a Maori unofficial Democrat. Surprisingly enough, they did not all lose their deposits by failing to poll one quarter of the votes for the successful candidate, although one Nationalist did.

NATIONAL CANDIDATES:

When the writs were closed on November 12th and nominations ceased, there were six seats without National candidates. These were not contested either because of the strength of the opposing Labour candidates or, in the cases of Thames and Well-

FORBES

COATES

ington Suburbs, because the Independents who held the seats were anti-Labour men whose chances would be endangered if a Nationalist intervened and who had generally supported the Coalition. Elsewhere the Nationalists mustered up what strength they could but were handicapped by having so many newcomers standing in the places vacated by older men. Sir Charles Statham, the Speaker, had retired; so had W.H.Field of Otaki, who at seventy years of age had 33 years of service behind him.

The party was further handicapped by the opprobrium that was attached to the names of those who had been in office in the preceding four years. It coloured the public's attitude towards the innocent new entrants. Even those who had supported the Coalition were not uncritical. The resignation of Stewart from the Cabinet and the independent attitude taken up by Stallworthy, Veitch and Samuel only confirmed the public's suspicions that the party leaders were not men of vision and were inadequate for the positions they held.

It was unfortunate for the astute Coates that he had to share the leadership with the less capable but more popular Forbes. Forbes's qualities were closer to those of the common man and together they must have resented Coates's mental energy, which had such unpalatable repercussions in financial wizardry. Though he was the butt of much jesting, [1] Forbes was a highly respected veteran and tribute was made to his sterling qualities

1. Beaglehole in "New Zealand", p.89, says of Forbes that he spent "a lengthy period in Parliament without giving rise to the suspicion that he would one day lead it".

in the nickname "Honest George". As often happens, the relationship between the Prime Minister and Finance Minister became a subject for jeering, so that Forbes was depicted as being unable to make a decision without permission from Coates. Criticism of both is implied in the remarks of a newspaper correspondent: [1] "We are tired of Government apologists and want representatives who will look after this island. ....With all Mr. Coates's faults, and they are legion, he certainly looks after the North Island and will be able to do so as long as we send him men to dance to his fiddling".

It was inevitable that the heaviest responsibility should fall on Coates in his key position and, being ten years younger, he displayed a vigour and enterprise that were not seen in the Prime Minister. He might win grudging admiration but nothing warmer. "He had little cultural background .... his careful dressing and innocent swagger irritated some .... and it is certain that he was the victim of slanderous gossip." [2] Though he was the leader of the Government's Right Wing, he was illogically charged with Socialism, because he had added to his secretarial staff monetary experts whose views were unorthodox to an older school of financiers who had not been set problems concerning economic chaos. The ordinary man, understanding little and suffering much, looked on Coates as the author of the troubles that were complained of on all sides. It was only

1. "Press", November 21st, 1935.
2. Mulgan, "From Track to Highway", p.117-118.

with difficulty that he retained his seat in 1935.

Among those who lost their seats, was W. Downie Stewart, who would have been a valuable Opposition member. Having withdrawn from the battle before he could be committed to measures which, in bringing relief to some, always agonised more, he retained the esteem of opponents as well as supporters. It was regretted [1.] that "his financial and economic knowledge and experience, his lucid and temperate criticism" would no longer be at the service of the House. Among other candidates to be rejected were some who have since entered the ranks and risen to Cabinet positions in the first National Party Government. If the people saw their abilities then, however, unhappy memories of their colleagues' administration blotted out the vision.

LABOUR CANDIDATES:

There was a curious willingness on the part of conservative critics of Labour policies to make generous testimonies of the personal worth of Labour leaders. Even if not above reproach (Mr. Semple's language was already notable) they were acknowledged [2.] to be "men of high ideals and some capacity", but no confidence was felt in their financial abilities. This opinion was based on distrust of their policy, which seemed impossible of attainment, and on their inexperience, not on their ability to understand the complexities of economic problems. probably their opponents would not have agreed with the commen-

1. "Round Table", Vol. 26, p.427.
2. "Mercantile Gazette", 1935, Vol. 2, p.1,034.

tator [1] who claimed that they were better informed than typical members of other parties, but they would have conceded that the Labour candidates were "thoughtful and reasonable men". It may have been felt that it would be dangerous to the hopes of Nationalists to persuade the electors to reject the lures of Labour by attempting to belittle their candidates. Their popularity was obvious, and of recent years their public utterances had been of a more discreet character. The class war and uncompromising Socialism of earlier years were restricted imports. It was found that home-grown philosophies suited New Zealanders better.

The previous leader, H. E. Holland, had been a militant leader who expressed himself with unbridled passion. M. J. Savage, who succeeded him in 1934, quickly rose to great heights of popularity. He was no less determined than Holland but was more gently persuasive. A man who looked so modest and benevolent could scarcely be represented by his critics as a rabid revolutionary. It was a judicious move for Savage to begin stumping the country as early as January of election year. It gave the electorates a chance to see him, and his party had time to build up a picture of a successor to Seddon - a leader from the people for the people.

In April of 1935, 53 Labour candidates had already been chosen - 45 of these were elected. The work of selection was done by Labour Representation Committees and their choice

1. Morrell, "New Zealand", p.227.

was approved by the National Executive. Altogether 70 candidates were found, six European electorates being left uncontested as the Party was thought to have little chance of success in these.[1] The decision to avoid probable and costly defeats was justified when the results showed that, with the exception of Coates's seat, Kaiapoi, all these electorates were won by Independents - sitting members who polled well.

INDEPENDENTS:

It is at variance with the name of Independent to treat these candidates as a group, but some general features stand out from the miscellaneous information about them. It would appear that among their numbers were some of the more articulate and reflective men. Of the five letters received[2] from candidates about the political situation in 1935, three were from Independents and two from Democrats. Added to this are the results of the voting, which show that the average Independent was much more favourably received than most Democrats. Then eight of the thirty-six pakeha Independents had had previous Parliamentary service averaging from ten to eleven years. This is the more remarkable when we remember how the Independent was attacked by all parties as being politically useless, as lacking support in the House, and as having no more than a subordinate part in law-making.

1. According to the National Secretary's report on the election in the Labour Party's Annual Conference Report, 1936. These were districts with weak Labour Branches and little money.
2. In answer to a letter and questionnaire sent by the writer to about 110 candidates. Only 50 questionnaires were returned. See copy in Appendix A.

Among these men were some who had previously belonged to the Coalition but had chosen to leave it. Because of his dissatisfaction over the treatment of the unemployed, A.M. Samuel had said that he felt that, by being independent, he could better represent his constituency, than by being a member of a party which paid so little heed to the appeals of the suffering poor". [1] Other members of the Coalition who had withdrawn from it were A.J. Stallworthy and W.A. Veitch, who contested the election as Democrats, and H. Atmore, who, though calling himself a Democrat, was spoken of and re-elected as an Independent, who had consistently supported the Labour Party. Two other ex-Coalition members were R.A. Wright and D. McDougall. Wright at least on one occasion, however, returned to his former allegiance and with Wilkinson, another Independent, supported the Government against a no-confidence motion on September 11th, 1935. [2]

It was discovered by most Independents that their name was only an illusion; that if they wanted any hope of election they had to hitch their waggons to one of the larger stars; but there was little hope of their being elected if the local Labour or National candidate was at all supportable. Sometimes this discouraged them altogether. An Independent of Otaki withdrew in favour of a Labour candidate. [3] Others who stayed the course, gave rather inconsequential reasons for

1. "Press", Christchurch, November 18th, 1935.
2. P.D., Vol. 242, September 11th, 1935, p.246.
3. "New Zealand Herald", Nov. 1st, 1935.

following a particular party. L.C. Walker [1] would support the Government in a no-confidence motion because it had set up a committee to investigate his plan for a new state in Southland. It was Duff's desire to see the personnel of Parliament changed, so that should Labour be returned to power he would not use his vote, if elected, to "jockey them out" [2] Other Independents kept aloof. In reply to the usual question about his reaction to a no-confidence motion, V.H. Potter declared that his policy was to be straightforward and conscientious "without playing to the political gallery." [3] This did not recommend him to the elector, who wished to have the representative most likely to be in a position to have his intended programme implemented. It must have been galling for the Independent Country Party and other monetary reformers who had worked so earnestly in the cause of social credit to be rejected in favour of the Labour Party which had stolen their thunder. It made capital out of the mortgagee's bitterness and out of the work of the monetary reform movement. According to Penniket, [4] Savage admitted more than once that it was the work of the reformers that put Labour in. What they had advocated, eg. state control of the Reserve Bank, social credit for housing and public works, a guaranteed price for the dairy exporter and cash payments to mothers with dependent children, Labour was able to take the credit for when empowered to enact these measures.

1. "Press", Christchurch, November 18th, 1935.
2. O. Duff (Hurunui) as reported by the "Press", November 12, 1935.
3. From a newspaper clipping (with no date or reference) sent by Potter to the writer.
4. See manuscript p.17 of Candidates.

SAVAGE

HISLOP

No Independent could have been unaware of his slender hope of being returned. Most might feel they had been fortunate if their deposit was returned and if they could feel that in some small measure they had served to expose the political tricks of opponents, gaining for themselves the full voting weight they merited.

THE DEMOCRATS:

It was not intended by the original movers of the Democrat Party to go to the polls in great strength. The candidates were to be a select few, but as the organisation changed, with control passing from Auckland to the Wellington headquarters, so the complexion of the Party changed. Instead of 15 candidates, 53 was the final score. Perhaps if the organiser's time had not been partly taken up in quarrels [1.] with the Auckland originators of the Democrats, there might have been an even greater offering. It had been under consideration. In his inaugural speech, Hislop [2.] referred to the expectation of having a candidate for all of the 80 electorates.

Hislop himself was expected to poll well. He was a barrister and solicitor who, though three times Mayor of Wellington, had had no national political experience. He was by repute a capable administrator and a lucid speaker. Whether or not he would have thought so at the time of the campaign, Davy

1. Supra, p.20, also "N.Z.H.", October 19th, 1935.
2. "Evening Post", October 2nd, 1935.

expressed the opinion later [1] that Hislop failed to win his seat or attract a wider following for his party, because he had no warmth and "left the audience cold", in spite of his polished speeches.

Like Hislop, many other Democrats had served on local bodies. One candidate was a woman [2] who had formerly been Mayoress of Dunedin. Although many Democrats were experienced in public service, only A.J. Stallworthy, W.A. Veitch and J.B. Donald had had any Parliamentary experience. The Party consisted mainly of business and professional men and some farmers. Among an imposing galaxy of an ex-professor, a former Director of Education, a retired Army Colonel and various company directors, Veitch's engine-driver background seemed a little out of place. The cause of the Democrat's defeat lay less in the quality of the candidates than in the policy, the strength of the opposing forces (among which must be numbered the newspapers) and the lack of Democrat propaganda.

THE AGES OF CANDIDATES:

Since it has not been possible to complete the personal records of each candidate, there are necessarily gaps in information. Over 100 ages have had to be omitted from the calculations so that the following tables can be considered only approximate. To overcome difficulties of accuracy here median ages have been used to give a more typical survey of members and candidates.

1. In an interview with the writer in September, 1948.
2. Mrs. R.S. Black, who wrote "Sunshine and Shadow", containing references to this election.

AGES OF CANDIDATES: TABLE 4.

AGE	Nat.	Lab.	Dem.	Ind.	Others	TOTALS
70-75	4	-	-	1		5
65-69	6	3	3	3		15
60-64	7	5	2	2	1 (Lib.)	17
55-59	15 Median	7	4	1		27
50-54	10	13 Med.	4 Med.	3 Med.		30 Median
45-49	2	12	6	3		23
40-44	4	6	1	1	1 (Lib.)	13
35-39	2	1	1	3	1 (Comm.)	8
30-34	1	4	1	-		6
25-29	-	3	-	-		3
	51 (74)	58 (73)	22 (56)	17 (42)		147

Figures in brackets show total number of candidates of a particular party, indicating that complete records are not available.

AGES OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. TABLE 5.

AGE	Parliamt. 1931	Parliamt. 1935	Lab.	Nat.	Ind.
70-75	2	1	-	-	1
65-69	6	8	3	2	3
60-64	12	10	6	4	-
55-59	16 Med.	12	6	5	1
50-54	16	16 Median	12	4	-
45-49	12	6	6	-	-
40-44	2	7	4	2	1
35-39	-	-	-	-	-
30-34	-	4	3	1	-
25-29	1	3	3	-	-
	67 (80)	66 (80)	43 (53)	18	5

It will be seen from Table IV that the most common age for all candidates in 1935 was between 50 and 54 years, but that the National candidates were from 5 to 10 years older than those of other parties. That the Government should be older than their opponents at the end of a term of office, was inevitable. Usually the balance is restored by deaths, resignations and finally by new blood after each election, but Coalition members began as an older group (see table V) than the candidates of four years later. Their median age in 1931 was between 54 and 59 years and so it remained at the election of 1935.

Part of the reason for this is attributed to Forbes. He was accused [1.] of being over-loyal to his colleagues, of rewarding those who had been helpful by appointing them to office. He had not rejuvenated the Government and, if ever bold young spirits were needed, it was to find solutions for depression difficulties which orthodox finance seemed incapable of mastering.

On consideration of the election results, it appears that advanced age is scarcely a handicap in politics. More than half of the re-elected National members were older than the median age for the members of Parliament, and four of the Inde-

1. By A. J. Stallworthy in a letter to the writer, 24-7-48. This may be the statement of a disappointed office-seeker. Stallworthy was Minister of Health in the United Government.

pendents could only be called elderly. The electors in weighing advancing years against experience and useful services must have preferred proven older men to inexperienced younger ones. This was to be expected from conservative electors.

The young men standing for election were nearly all in the Labour ranks, and all but one were elected. Apart from T. H. McCombs, who was five months old in Parliamentary experience, they were all untried members.

1935 PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE OF ELECTED MEMBERS. TABLE 6.

Years of Service	Numbers of Candidates, elected 1935				1931
	Labour	National	Independent	Total	Number of Candidates
17 or more	1	2	1	4	3
15 - 16	4	2	-	-	1
13 - 14	4	3	1	8	3
11 - 12	-	-	-	-	9
9 - 10	4	2	-	6	6
7 - 8	4	4	3	11	-
5 - 6	2	1	-	3	9
3 - 4	6	2	-	8	14
2 - 1	-	-	-	-	4
Less 1	1	-	-	1	-
None	27	2	1	30	7
	53	18	6	77	63
Average Service	4.3Yrs.	10.1 Yrs.	11.6 Yrs.	6.4 Yrs.	6.7 Yrs.

PARLIAMENTARY EXPERIENCE:

There is little to choose between the old Parliament and the new one in experience in the House. The average service of members of the 1931 Parliament was 6.7 years whereas the new members averaged 6.4 years. That is, in the aggregate, retiring members were slightly more experienced in Parliamentary affairs. The individual sections, however, are very different. The Labour members included 27 men who had no previous connection with the House. In the total figures their inexperience was offset by the high average service of the re-elected National Independent members. Amongst these were Forbes with 27 years to his credit, Coates with 24 and R. A. Wright (Ind.) with 24. On the Labour side Mr. Fraser's 17 years heads the list.

EDUCATION OF CANDIDATES: TABLE 7.

	National	Labour	Democrat	Independent	Others
Primary	54	58	22	23	8
Secondary	34	32	16	20	7
University	22	15	11	10	3

EDUCATION:

The search for information about the education of candidates was made more difficult by the reluctance of some men to disclose their secrets. Often no mention of it is made in their biographies[1] or in personal histories given to newspapers. It can only be assumed, since most of these men

1. e.g. as in Scholefield's "New Zealand Dictionary of Biography or "Who's Who in New Zealand".

were between 50 and 60, or younger, that they would, under the Education Act of 1877, havehad the required elementary schooling until thirteen years old. Others, by their bristling or defensive tone, have tacitly acknowledged inadequate schooling, stating that they learned in the "school of adversity" or from "life's experience". Many have given details of their efforts to educate themselves. One Independent candidate spent the whole of the 1907 session of Parliament in New Zealand, listening to the debates in the House, and other periods amounting to months, reading in libraries in New Zealand and overseas.

Although more information was available about the education of Labour than of other candidates, they had proportionally fewer university-trained men than the other groups. These figures do not take into account, however, the numerous other sources of learning besides formal schooling. Many of the Labour leaders spent evening hours after work in night schools and were connected with the Workers' Educational Association of New Zealand as organisers and tutors. Others have attended technical and commercial schools and have mastered courses of study, either self-imposed, or under the direction of various educational institutions.[1.]

1. "Round Table" Vol. 26, March 1936, p.432: "The Calibre of the Labour Party has made a favourable impression, and the general opinion is that the House of Representatives will be superior in education, intelligence and experience to that just deceased".

A TYPICAL ADVERTISEMENT

PALMERSTON ELECTORS!

REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD SUPPORT

J. A. NASH

THE OFFICIAL NATIONAL CANDIDATE

Holds Record for Public Service which is hard to equal in New Zealand.

HE IS RECOGNISED AS THE WORKERS' FRIEND

30 years Chamber of Commerce—3 years President.
1 year Borough Councillor.
15 years (consecutive) Mayor.
26 years Hospital Board.
26 years Foxton Harbour Board.
9 years President and Chairman Patriotic Society—War Work.
22 years Chairman District Nurse Committee.
3 years Chairman and Founder Gorge Board of Control.
5 years Chairman Palmerston N.-Kairanga River Board.
15 years Member and Chairman P.N. Fire Board.
23 years President Municipal Band.
16 years Chairman Terrace End School Committee.
4 years Chairman School Committees' Association.
24 years Member, and Chairman 3 years, High School Board of Governors.
17 years your Member of Parliament.
12 years Chairman Manawatu-Oroua Power Board.
11 years President and Founder of N.Z. Power Boards' Association.
22 years (17 years Vice-President and 1 year President) Manawatu A. & P. Association.
21 years President Manawatu Bowling Centre.
27 years Director and Chairman N.Z. Farmers' Dairy Union.
23 years Director and Chairman Manawatu Permanent Building and Investment Society.

VOTE FOR J. A. NASH

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE:

One of the most persistent educators is contact in daily life with the public. Some candidates participated to the full in public life, gaining varied experience and understanding of local affairs through service on councils and boards. One candidate, J. A. Nash of Palmerston, had printed an imposing array of services he had rendered. *.

Under the heading "Local Government" is included not only service on city, borough or county councils, but also membership of any elected local body providing some public service, e.g. harbour, hospital, highways, river control and similar public boards. The majority of candidates in every party had some record of local government service. Of those actually elected, about 72% had served on some local council or board, and this percentage rose even higher (77%) for a small section of the members, those who had never been elected to the House before. It would seem, then, that local councils provide stepping stones to Parliament House.

OCCUPATIONS:

It was said of the House of Representatives dissolved in 1935 that its members were "associated with as many as thirty different vocations". 1. Including the Speaker of the House (Sir Charles Statham, who retired in 1935) "there are ten lawyers, of whom six are in the Coalition Party Government but none now in the Ministry. This is the first time for many years that the Ministry is without a representative of the law". 2.

1. Democrat Party Official Handbook.
2. ibid.

*. See illustration facing p.48.

This situation was deplored by O. C. Mazengarb, when asked if he approved of Mr. Forbes, as farmer holding the position of Attorney-General.[1.]

The comment was made "Industries, commerce and skilled occupations other than farming have remarkably few representatives but there are enough farmers to form a national union".[2.]

There were thirty-five farmers in the House, of whom thirty-one supported the Government. The Labour Opposition contained only one ex-farmer. Still others made a hobby of farming in addition to their activities as company directors, Cabinet Ministers, race-horse owners and businessmen.

This predominance of farmers in the Government was criticized by the Democrat Party, which could point to a thoroughly representative selection of candidates for election. They did include farmers (dairying and sheep farmers, orchardists, beekeepers, poultry raisers and tobacco growers) but also had representatives of a variety of other occupations. "The Democrats number among their ranks.... barristers, a master painter, a doctor, a retired clergyman, merchants, accountants, company secretaries, business men, mayors of some of the principal cities and boroughs, a former director of Education, a gold miner, a noted authority on afforestation, a former Mayoress of a large city and leading men from trade and labour circles".[3.]

1. "Dominion", Wellington, Nov. 22nd, 1935.
2. Democrat Party Official Handbook.
3. ibid.

OCCUPATIONS OF 1935 ELECTION CANDIDATES. TABLE 8.

	1935 Candidates.						1935 Parliament.			
	Nat.	Lab.	Dem.	Ind.	Others	TOTAL	Lab.	Nat.	Others	TOTAL
M.P. only	1	6	1			8	5	3		8
Union Official		13			2	15	10			10
Farmer	27	12	1	4	2	46	10	11	1	22
Coy. Director	7		1	3		11		3		3
Lawyer	8	3	4	2		17	3	2	1	6
Business	5	17	5	4	2	33	10		2	12
Secretary	3	3				6	3			3
Engineer	1	3				4	3			3
Teacher	1	1	2	3		7	1			1
Clergyman		3				3	2			2
Doctor		1	1			2	1			1
Clerk	2	2				4				
Accountant			2	1		3				
Journalist		1	1	1		3				
Baker							2			2
Builder							1			1
Salesman				2		2				
Miscellaneous [1.]	1	1	2	1	1	6				
Number of Candidates						170				74

1. Miscellaneous includes a retired army colonel, a seaman, a bank president, two housewives and a miner.

It is apparent from Table 8 that if the Labour Party was not guilty of offering such a restricted type of candidate as the National Party did, yet it too tended to be rather sectional. Businessmen and party and union officials over-emphasized the city electorate, although there were twelve farmers, ten of whom were elected, to stand in the interests of rural voters. The ten secretaries and officials employed in party work and trade union positions represented mainly the working class of industrial and city areas, and from the nature of their employment would have to put party considerations first, rather than the multiple demands of their electorates. That is, being tied to the programme of a Party on which he was partly dependent for his living, such a man could never be an independent agent representing the whole of his electorate.

In some ways, however, the trade union secretary was a more valuable candidate than most. He was usually a man who had had to make personal sacrifices [1.] to put the interests of fellow workers first. His persistence would surely betoken a man with more than usual interest in the common good. This enthusiasm for public service could not fail to illumine his Parliamentary undertakings.

1. According to Dell, Past President of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, prior to 1936 if a worker were elected Union secretary his employer (sometimes a Government Department) usually dismissed him immediately; or might dismiss a man merely for being a member of the Labour Party. The Secretary was then dependent on the small income he received from Union dues.

It cannot be claimed for Labour that their candidates had a monopoly of altruism. Politicians undoubtedly suffer many inconveniences and expose themselves to financial dangers, endure long sittings, and tedious speakers, invite damaging criticism which may threaten their private happiness and never know security. They cannot be wholly compensated by their salaries, opportunities and prestige. There must be in most of them a conviction that special abilities or advantages should be used to benefit as many as possible of their countrymen. It is certain that most of these candidates had unusual qualities of personality, character or capacity, even the unsuccessful ones, and the much-criticized defeated Government. No matter what their several differences of policy and conviction were, there was a common core of sacrificial spirit. It is only a pity that party Government enables the policy, and not the man, to win the day, often discarding some of the finer spirits.

THE ISSUES.

Because of the predominance of poverty and insecurity in the lives of most New Zealanders during depression years, the parties concerned themselves almost wholly with economic and fincial proposals for continuing and accelerating national recovery. This preoccupation with domestic well-being has been typical of New Zealand politics and is natural, too, in a nation so isolated, geographically and so well-connected, diplomatically. Discussions on foreign affairs evoke little interest compared with concern for the maintenance of the national living-standard. Where matters concerning the League of Nations were of merely academic interest, immigration policies could arouse questioning and newspaper correspondence.

A few sentences from the platform and an inch of space in a newspaper sufficed to pledge the National Party to support the League of Nations and co-operate with Britain and other parts of the Empire in matters of defence. Other parties and candidates took the same tone in their perfunctory references to international and Empire affairs. This was the year of the Italian assault on Abyssinia, which had aroused more than usual interest in matters of defence but did not shake the nation out of its lethargy. The general attitude was voiced by W.J. Polson, member for Stratford, when discussing military sanctions; he said that "the mere suggestion of any such action has been expressly repudiated by His Majesty's

Government, and, of course, is out of the question for New Zealand." [1.] Minor criticisms offered by Savage did not disguise his reluctance to be any further involved. During the campaign Labour candidates were no different from others in the scant references they made to overseas matters, except those affecting the economic position of this country. It was with the latter in mind that Hislop [2.] pledged the Democrats to keep the spirit of the Ottawa agreements - a euphonious way of warning farmers that they would have to accept continued export quotas and restrictions if Empire co-operation required it. The only person found to disagree with the Government decision of 1931 to restrict immigrants with insufficient capital was L.C. Walker (Ind.) who had a plan [3.] which would obviate any conflict with New Zealanders in need of employment. It was rare for candidates to spend time on such topics. They found plenty of domestic problems to discuss.

There was a similar lack of attention in electoral speeches to constitutional affairs. Though the country quota was usually attacked by Labour members, it was not made an issue in 1935, as the Labour Party did not wish to antagonise farmers. There were, however, loud denunications of the Coalition's step in lengthening the life of Parliament by one year. This was held to be un-democratic. An amendment to

1. P.D., Vol. 243, p.505.
2. "Press", October 2nd, 1935.
3. Mentioned in correspondence in "Press", November 14th, 1935.

the Electoral Act was promised for the restoration of triennial Parliament. [1]

Earlier, the Labour platform had included another constitutional plank - proportional representation. In Labour's lean years such a system would have given their candidates greater chances of obtaining seats. Morrell observed that the demand for proportional representation was no longer included in the platform after the Party's Annual Conference in March, 1934. [2] No doubt by this time having twenty-four elected members and hope of many more to come as the Coalition's unpopularity showed little sign of waning, the need had faded. After their first dismay at the appearance of the Democrat Party, the Labour members regained their conviction that this year they were closer than ever before to power. So completely had they lost interest in the application of the preferential vote to New Zealand elections, that they were held to be the reason for the Government's ignoring last-minute agitation for adoption of such a system; "it fears that such a change would invite destructive criticism from the Labour Party". [3] The agitation came from R.A. Wright (Ind.), who considered that preferential voting should be introduced in view of the large number of candidates offering themselves for election. [4]

1. "Press", October 31st, 1935. see also Paul, "Humanism in Politics", p.99.
2. Morrell, "New Zealand", p.230.
3. By "Round Table" Vol. 26, 1935, p.205.
4. P.D. Vol. 242, p.214.

The cry was taken up outside the House by the Democrats but the members were left quite unconvinced.

It was not clear what benefit could be gained from preferential voting unless it accompanied proportional representation, and the latter could scarcely achieve fairer representation of minorities in New Zealand's single-member constituencies. [1.] Besides, it obviously could not be made applicable without a major electoral upheaval and with an election pending no one wanted to experiment. Probably some of the Government members later regretted their lack of interest in Wright's schemes but, confronted with the choice, they preferred to gamble.

When the Coalition came to the end of their last Parliamentary session, in spite of partial recovery from the depression, they could not feel confident at the prospect ahead. They had had their extra year, though the Labour Party raged and the Trades Unions sulked. But what could they now show as justification? There could not very well be a volte-face to optimism and generous spending policies. Their policy had to be sober to bear out the sombre warnings of the past. There was little reward now in being able to take advantage of better prices for farm produce to promise new

1. Members using the term "proportional representation" did not seem to be aware that the system could not be applie to New Zealand's single-member constituencies; nor was it clear that they knew the difference between "preferential voting" and the second ballot, which had already been tried in New Zealand. See Lipson, "Politics of Equality", p.190.

measures. The housing survey was decried as "window-dressing". If it had at last been found possible to give relief, long-clamoured for, to certain beneficiaries of the State, their opponents took the credit for forcing the Government to give way to popular demand.

Lee's forebodings [1] that the Government would attempt to win people with a "prosperity Budget" and with slogans like "Happy Days are here again", expressed the uncertainty that periodically shook Labour's confidence. He was not the only one to speculate thus. The journal "Tomorrow" surmised [2] that the farmers would be offered an attractive marketing agreement with Britain and that the solidly Labour city electorates would be wooed with promises that something would be done about the housing shortage.

The Labour programme, which had been before the electors for months, was re-affirmed in the summary "Twelve Points" on September 9th. The Budget came out on September 18th. A gradual loosening-up was the best that the Nationalists could offer. No general benefits could be announced though many promises were made. A month previously, pensioners and war veterans had had increases in their pensions; now it was the turn of some civil servants to have the cuts in their wages restored. No particular effort was made to win over the

1. See P.D., Vol. 242, p.405.
2. "Tomorrow", August 3rd, 1935.

labouring-classes. To the business community only incidental assistance was promised. Any voluntary action by industrialists to reorganise and co-ordinate industries of "proved efficiency" would be supported by Government legislation if required, [1].

Most newspapers approved of the cautious lifting of the economising measures but the "Evening Post" [2] wondered why the Government, instead of ending the year with a credit balance of £1,333,000, would not "lighten taxation so that employers other than the State could pass something on to the consumers on their own". This was the most critical comment; other newspapers made no complaint about the slow relief from depression taxes.

To their farmer supporters, the Government offered nothing more than the concessions already in operation and their share in any general benefits. It was pointed out that there had been an appreciable rise in the export value of farm produce since 1931-2 [3] and because of this an increase also in the value of bank deposits. The Government would sustain national production by continuing to avoid extravagant expenditure, so preventing increased taxation; by promoting the continuance of cheap credit, [4] and the adjustment of mortgages where still

1. "Press", October 29th, 1935.
2. September 18th, 1935.
3. See Beaglehole, "New Zealand", p.162, also Appendix to P.D. 1934-5, B.6, XVII.
4. e.g. the bank overdraft rate dropped from 7% in 1930, to 4½% in 1934: "Press", October 29th.

needed, and by co-operating with the Reserve Bank to stabilize exchange.

If the farmer did not find this sufficiently reassuring, there were additional attractions in the general benefits: there were promises of surveys of soil, mineral and other resources; increased public works; free milk for school children; extension of library facilities, and improved educational conditions; and a national housing scheme was to be launched. Though not provided for in the Budget, a national superannuation scheme and health service were to be provided "as soon as financial conditions permit".

Since the collapse of prices for farm produce in 1921, there had been more acceptance of the necessity for subjecting primary producers to control of Boards regulating quantity and marketing of exports. After 1931, markets in Canada, Australia and the United States for New Zealand butter and cheese were closed, while Britain allowed only mutton and lamb to be imported untaxed. The Dairy Produce and Meat Export Control Boards were followed by others in addition to various co-ordinating boards. The original intention of keeping the Boards under Cabinet supervision was not adhered to. They had been authorised by Orders-in-Council to act for producers (whose representatives were in a majority on these Boards).

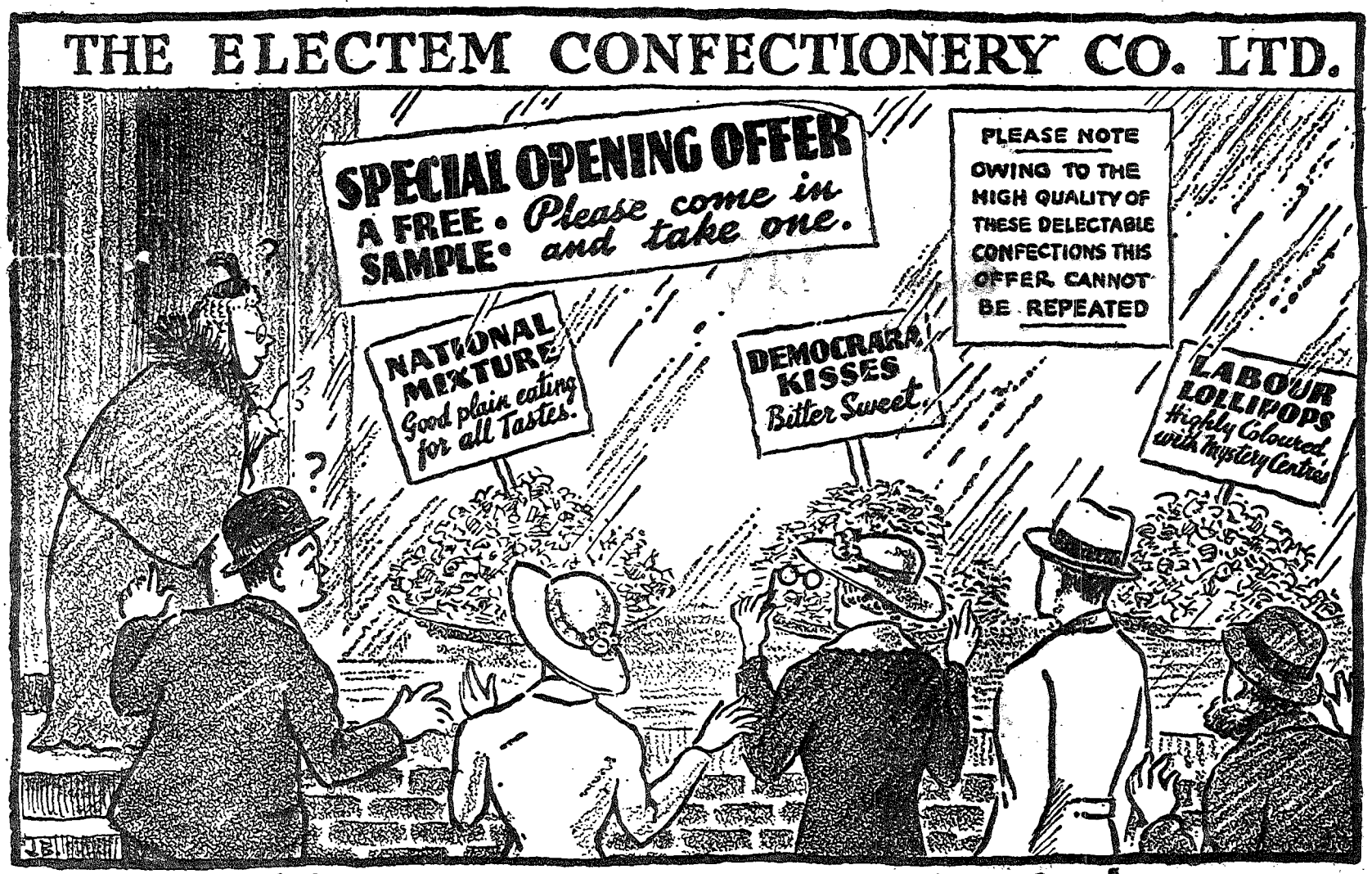
The Democrats took exception to this advance in "bureaucratic controls of Boards and Commissions" [1] as evidence

1. Hislop, in an electoral speech. "Press", Oct. 2nd, 1935.

of the Coalition's pernicious "State Socialism". They themselves would retain only advisory bodies. Conversely, Labour thought that the State should have even more control of marketing, doing the intermediary buying of all primary produce, whether for foreign or local consumption. For the time being, Labour made most of the benefits it would bring to the dairy farmer.

The National Party, having tried to appease the farmer, could do little more. Undoubtedly designed to win over the townsman, who had been the worst sufferer from unemployment, the policy of expansion of public works and consequent reabsorption of unemployed men was also of national interest. A positive policy like this could restore the confidence that was needed to open new enterprises and fresh avenues of employment.

Workers might also have been interested in the Nationalist's promise to maintain adequate working conditions by adoption of relevant general standards. Special attention was to be given to safeguarding boy apprentices. These worthy and inexpensive concessions were trifling compared with the immediate boons to be granted by the Labour and Democrat parties. The Nationalists were limited in any avenue of approach to the electors by the nature of the budget recently announced. They could not go beyond its limits of no new taxation and few immediate concessions. They could only reiterate that everything had been done for the best and that there was nothing more to



SOMETHING FOR NOTHING !

worry about. Coates's cry "Turned the Corner" had been useful to spur the spent public steadily on. Now there was enough energy in them to want to make a sprint but the Nationalists were settled down to a sedate pace that left the people restless.

Though Coates warned the electors against being "beguiled by the impossible promises of political novices," [1.] he did not fear the Democrats nearly as much as the Labour party. In addition to their traditional championing of the workers' cause, Labour had made great strides in interesting the farmer. During Budget debates [2.] Coates admitted the attractiveness of guaranteed prices to pastoral and agricultural interests but contended that the high exchange rate was achieving the same result without risking additional expenditure by the State. In Forbes's opinion [3.] "every sensible man" knew quite well that so many promises and guarantees could never be carried out, but the Labour Party had an answer for both of these criticisms.

Morrell [4.] considers that nothing was more remarkable than the attempt of the trade union leaders at the Labour Party Conference of 1932, "to find common ground with the working farmers". The depression vividly impressed on the industrial

1. "Press", Nov. 6th, 1935.
2. "Round Table", Vol. 24, p.213.
3. "Press", Nov. 6th, 1935.
4. Morrell, "New Zealand", p.184.

worker and unionist the vital place of primary production in New Zealand's economy. With that the policy of guaranteed prices evolved. Labour's first point was to deny that variable overseas prices and limitations need control the standard of living in New Zealand. It could be controlled from within by careful planning of production and marketing to alter in anticipation of fluctuations in demand.

The provision of guaranteed prices for farm produce was only one aspect of a larger view. [1] By control of currency and credit the Government could fully utilize the resources of the nation for the benefit of all. One of the provisions for a decent living standard was a statutory minimum wage but the party recognised that the quickest route to this ideal was through the re-establishment of stable, prosperous farming and that the effect of this would penetrate to business and industry. This would allow the spreading of the national income over large numbers who at the time of the campaign had inadequate incomes.

This basic wage and its precursor , the guaranteed price, were the most recent additions to a platform which, with a few modifications, had been expounded by Labour since 1919. Time and a veneer of temperance had blunted the sharpest points. Perhaps the difficulties of the past four years had dimmed the Party's confidence in Socialism as a panacea to be applied to all economic ills. They omitted to call for nationalisation of land. No more was heard of the steeply graduated income

1. See Policy statement. Paul, "Humanism in Politics", Appendix C, p.166.

tax, of higher taxing of unimproved land and unearned income. These had been in Labour platforms for twelve years. But this was not the time to press the socialist push-button in the electorate's ear. It would be most offensive to the one section of the community most likely to change Labour's fortunes and least likely to stand for nationalisation of land. The strident note heard from 1916 to 1927: "The objective of the Party is the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange", [1] was muted to "The objective of the Labour Party is to utilize to the maximum degree the wonderful resources of the Dominion". [2]

It was particularly necessary in New Zealand for a potential Government to have support from the farming community, since the country quota had given disproportionate representation to the rural population. It is significant that six of the newly elected Labour members in 1935 were farmers and at least twelve of the candidates were farmers - mostly in North Island electorates. This factor must have been re-assuring to those to whom a "Socialist" programme would be repellent.

Also to be found in North Island electorates were the monetary reformers who might believe, from a vague gesture in the Labour platform, that social credit doctrines had a future. Labour promised to assume control of the public credit and es-

1. Ibid., Appendix A, p.157.
2. Ibid., Appendix C, p.165.

tablish a national credit authority whose duty it would be to provide a money service sufficient to give effect to the will of Parliament. This intention did not alarm the Christchurch "Press", which commented [1] that "no real difference of political philosophy separates the parties. The Labour programme, with the possible exception of a vague promise to make the Reserve Bank into a National credit authority, is not socialist". The most definite proposal made in this connection was for the purchase of private shares in the Reserve Bank to bring it under State Control and to deal similarly with the Mortgage Corporation, whose creation, Labour had resisted strongly.

Apart from the foregoing - guaranteed prices, basic wages, credit control - there was little difference between Labour's programme and that of the Democrats, as Savage complained [2], referring to the twelve Democrat points, which were "counterfeiting" Labour policy. MInhinnick (an Auckland cartoonist, sympathetic to the National Party) mocked at both of them in his cartoon [3] on Captain Chloroform who promised to promise more promises than any other candidate.

As the leaders spoke only in generalities, any similarities in their policies were only superficial. They might begin at the same point, but went in opposite directions.

1. "Press", October 30th, 1935.
2. "Herald", October 7th, 1935. See also Appendix B for policy statements.
3. "New Zealand Herald", October 9th, 1935.

Each plan to encourage industry, but where the Labour politicians were preparing to impose shorter working hours, minimum wage levels and compulsory unionism (to restore the power of the Arbitration Court), the Democrats emphasized the desirability of "laissez-faire", rejoicing that already there was relief from compulsory arbitration.

It was obvious that, if not in policy, then in intention, the two parties were as opposite as right from left. Each pushed the Nationalists to the centre to be buffeted as they exchanged blows. The left could see little difference between the two anti-socialist parties, but the Democrats from the Right could see only "socialists", whether "of the openly-avowed Labour type, or the stealthily-assertive Coalition Brand". [1.]

Most of the lesser parties and persons had policies so indistinguished or inconsistent as to be ignored by the press after the first brief mention, except those which managed either to be amusing or amazing enough to catch a reporter's interest.

Only brief references were made in city newspapers to Maori campaigning. It would appear that the "N.Z. Herald" was correct in saying that Maori addresses were devoted mainly to various aspects of the native land question. T.K. Bragg, an Independent who gained nearly as many votes as the successful

1. "Evening Post", September 29th, 1935.
2. "N.Z.H.", September 25th, 1935.

Ratana candidate, made claims for support on the strength of the work he had done in connection with the Ngaitahu claims. "He said he had discovered on the books of the Native Land Court thousands of pounds in unclaimed sums due to Maoris throughout the Southern Maori electorate." [1] From the comments on applause and warmth of tone at his meetings, it appears that this was the way to the Maori elector's heart.

When Coates appeared in his own electorate for the last time before Maori polling, he was given clamorous assurances of support for Ngata, their own Nationalist candidate, and for Te Tomo, the Nationalist in Western Maori. They promised [2] to send messages urging that Te Tomo be returned since Ratana, the popular candidate there, was probably going to be a Labour supporter. That was deduced from his alliance with E.T. Tirikatene, who consistently voted with Labour, though he called himself an Independent. These two went on a tour of the North Island in company with another Ratana candidate and a retinue that included a band [3] With Tirikatene's Labour sympathies and Ratana's religious fervour they would scarcely need to trouble to state very definite policies.

The National and Labour platforms made no difference between Maori and pakeha but the Democrats were quite effusive with their promises to satisfy all claims for compensation as

1. "Press", November 5th, 1935.
2. "Press", November 21st, 1935.
3. "N.Z.H.", September 25th, 1935.

recommended by the various Royal commissions on the problem of forfeited tribal lands. There were promises also of a secret ballot [1] for Maori electors and development of their communities along progressive lines. Apparently the Maoris were not impressed. They gave only 11% of their votes to Democrats. Perhaps they had noticed that the promise of compensation made in October was not included in budget allocations outlined by Hislop on November 21st. From the party's point of view, the Maori vote was not important so that it was probably wiser in those last few days to appeal more to the stronger pakeha electorates.

It was curious that the Communist statement of policy should make such strong reference to Maori interests when they had no candidates standing in Maori electorates. The section on "Race Equality" [2] promised the Maori equal treatment with the pakeha in unemployment relief, wages and social services - the very things about which he did not make complaints - but the remaining three-quarters of it dealt with Samoan nationalism.

The other sections of the manifesto were given over to a number of moderate proposals for the economic bettering of working class life, expressed in sensational language: (relief workers lived in "slave camps"). While "small and middle" farmers were to be protected from evictions and forced

1. ibid., Nov. 26th 1935. Voting was then done orally to two returning officers sworn to secrecy.
2. See policy statement in the "Workers' Weekly", Aug, 10th, 1935.

sales and crippling interest rates, there were the customary attacks on capitalist repression of the toilers. Finally all war debts and imperial expenses were repudiated.

Like other small groups, the Communists tried to gain a little reflected glory by association with one of the large parties. In the last six months of 1935 the Communists approached Labour without success.[1] Some of the genuinely independent candidates, on the other hand, were galled by the frequency with which their questioners asked where their sympathies would lie in a no-confidence motion. Some Independents tried to avoid giving an answer. Sir Alexander Herdman said[2] that if elected he would vote to put the Government out of office and would vote to keep Labour out of office. There could be no doubt where he stood. Others ranged with either the National or Labour parties. Even Hislop stated that he would not record a vote which might have the effect of putting Labour into power. Savage chose to interpret this as an indication that the Democrat Party had been formed as the Government's secret weapon to keep Labour off the Treasury Benches.[3]

It is fairly clear that few Independents were given much consideration. Their speeches might arouse favourable comment but if they were to be returned there had to be an assurance that the Independent would vote in the House consist-

1. Supra p.23.
2. "N.Z.H.", October 1st, 1935.
3. "Press", November 6th, 1935.

ently with one of the major parties. Undisciplined by party whips, he was little more than a debater in the House, and the elector's vote was more or less wasted.

The feverish tension of the last few days before election concentrated attention on the essentials in policy. This appears clearly in the election eve broadcasts by the leaders of the three largest parties. Broadcasting had been banned throughout the campaign but Forbes, Coates, Savage and Hislop each gave a short address on Monday, November 25th, as Maori voting took place on the following day and European on the 27th. These addresses had to touch on their opponent's weakest points and without any preliminaries reach the esentials of each party policy. They indicate, too, the differing attitudes of the leaders towards campaigning by their choice of what to emphasize.

Forbes did not mention the Democrats. He urged all electors to vote but warned them against threatening "sound finance" by voting for Labour who offered only "an orgy of rash legislative experiments at the cost of financial confusion".[1] Coates spoke of the intrusion of Democrats and Independents who, by acting as vote-splitters, must not be permitted to endanger stable government. He referred to the two chief Labour planks - guaranteed prices and National control of currency and credit. He accused Labour of being utterly confused about the first, no two candidates telling the same story; the second, he said, would lead to inflation and chaos as Labour increased

1. "Evening Post", November 26th, 1935.

the volume of currency.

The Nationalists' theme was that the Coalition had done its best and would continue the good work of reconstruction. They were the only speakers who could have reviewed their period of office with a recital of achievements and wise decisions; but they had the misfortune not to be able to show nearly as much reconstruction as there had been destruction of the previously comfortable New Zealand standard of living. It was wiser not to remind the listeners of the past but to urge them to appreciate that recovery must not be endangered by experiments likely to get out of control.

Like Forbes, the Labour leader ignored the Democrats. He appealed to electors to vote for Labour candidates who would give the whole of their time to abolishing poverty. His only reference to others was the remark that the "discredited" Government was attempting to make it appear that Labour men were not to be trusted with the responsibility of Government but he pledged his party to try "to put right the sacrifices of the past four years".[1] His was the simplest task: to disparage the Coalition, blaming them for past tragedies. The Democrats had already been badly mauled by the press and Savage could afford to ignore their programme.

Hislop had to try to push aside the conviction, very widely held, that Labour was the only alternative to the Nationalists. With the bravado necessary to a politican he prophes-

1. ibid.

ied that the Nationalists would be lucky to retain 20 seats and that his own party, which "stood for true freedom", would win more seats than either of the two "Socialist" parties. He ended by reiterating his offer of a "sane and sound policy".

After two months of constant campaigning by all parties, a year of emanations from the Democrats, four years of Coalition rule and many years of unflagging Labour activities, the public must have suffered confusion from the embarrassment of riches from which to choose in November. Probably they had least idea of what to expect from the Government as its general trend of persuasion was "Let us go on doing the best we can". No sudden change of policy had been offered and only cautious action could be expected.

The attitude to Labour was probably more often extremist. Eager expectation of immediate boons was balanced by dread of the financial blows to be dealt to all above the low wage-earners and unionists. Those people would be the convinced ones, not to be weaned away from their allegiances. For every one of these, there must have been two more who were perplexed with the choice before them and who would feel that nothing could be worse than the policy that had governed the late Cabinet so that Labour could only be an improvement. It was less likely that they would do much damage than that they could do more good.

The contentious measures had already won admirers:

the dairy farmers generally were interested in any scheme like guaranteed prices which could protect them from further setbacks in preference to the raising of the exchange which disaster had forced out after the worst had been encountered. There was no need to work hard to win numbers to accept some change in credit control. Major Douglas had prepared the path along which many were to travel towards the Labour programme. The rest of the proposals offered by both Labour and Democrats were similar enough to give rise to the suspicion that the Democrats had resorted to borrowing ideas. The sympathy was with the first comers. Labour did not have to attract the business man since city electorates were already theirs, so they did not make the blunder of planning to lower the exchange rate as did the Democrat policy.

In the vital matter of attracting the farming vote, the Labour Policy had just sufficient "pull" to win the triangular tug-of-war while the Democrats were sapping the Government's strength.

PROPOGANDA AND PUBLICITY.

The high-powered political salesmanship introduced into New Zealand election campaigning by Davy was again in evidence in 1935, applied not only by him but also by the National Parties. They had been apt pupils, but the new techniques increased their problems of organisation and finance. Where once it had been possible to fight an election on as little as ten shillings,[1] a candidate could not now reduce it to much less than £50.[2] What one party did, the others were forced to do also. The greatest expenditure seems to have gone into travelling expenses for the leaders' tours, and for political literature, whether in newspapers or in pamphlets for household distribution. Unfortunately, because of the fourteen years that have elapsed since the election, none of the Nationalist or Democrat propaganda material, except what may be seen in newspapers, is available for comparison. There does, however, seem to be an indication that the National Party spent the most on propaganda in newspapers.[3]

1. Mr. Dell, (in a letter to the writer) quoted the case of F.R. Cooke who paid 10/- in 1928 for 2 calico signs which were hung on fences at the corner where he was going to speak. Each evening one of his committee men rang a bell for five minutes to attract a crowd.
2. The Labour Head Office appealed for £5,000 in 1935 to contest 70 electorates. This represents about £70 for each electorate.
3. There is the possibility that newspaper publishers may have contributed space to the National Party, which they supported, so that actual expenditure might not have been great.

They needed no one to tell them they were in a dangerous position. Even the change to a new name could not hold the waverers without some intensive work, so they kept up a steady campaign of advertising in the newspapers. These advertising blocks were lavishly and skilfully designed, some covering whole pages. Throughout November, they appeared in all the city dailies and in some of the country weeklies.

Especially were the opportunities of the last week exploited. In the seven issues of the Christchurch "Press" between Tuesday, November 19th and the following Tuesday - the day before the elections - there were six National Party advertisements averaging 154 sq. ins. to two Labour Party blocks averaging 74 sq. ins. There was fairly even distribution between attacks on the opponent's candidates and policies, and publicity for their own platform and candidates. The most vivid of the Nationalist designs showed a rat trap baited with the cheese of Guaranteed Prices. The caption - A TRAP FOR THE VOTER - warned rural electors not to be beguiled. Other topics were: the situation in British politics [1.] where there was A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE NATIONAL GOOD - New Zealanders were urged to follow Britain's lead; the safety of savings was illustrated by the danger of letting a Labour Government, as in New South Wales in 1931, manage a savings bank. "Don't let it happen here!" said the National Party.

1. Mr. Baldwin's photograph headed this National Party advertisement. This, and others mentioned, were seen at the Wellington office of Charles Haines Advertising Ltd.

Though there were many comments that Democrat candidates were to be treated as a joke, more serious attention was given to Hislop in a National advertisement which was headed: STARTLING CONFESSION!

DEMOCRAT LEADER TOO BUSY FOR POLITICS.

He was quoted as saying that "The Mayor of this city has far too many demands upon his time and mental and physical energy to be able to embark upon other public work".

Both National and Labour propagandists made use of a statement made as long since as 1909 by Sir Joseph Ward that the "Independent is of no use to anybody".[1.] Labour repeated it also in a handbill.[2.] But more than two could play at this game. Duff, Independent candidate for Hurunui, retaliated in the "North Canterbury Gazette", which he edited. He attacked Forbes by quoting his own remark in an election speech in 1928, when he said "God help New Zealand if it votes again for Coates".[3.]

Advertisements about individual candidates naturally dealt with their abilities and worthiness for election. A rash of these laudatory notices appeared in the last week of the campaign. Friday's issue (Nov. 22nd.) of the "Dominion" had twenty-two personal advertisements,[4.] 13 for Nationalists,

1. See P.D. Vol. 148, p.1,463.
2. see Appendix C. I.
3. Quoted from "North Canterbury Gazette", by "Standard", November 20th, 1935.
4. see Appendix C II for an example.

4 for Democrats, 5 for Independents but none for Labour candidates. The usual device adopted by them and others short of funds was the reproduction of a photograph accompanying notice of an address.

Probably the personal information given by candidates attached to a party was never as valuable a lure as descriptions of policy or past performance. It was always noticeable in the attitude of an audience towards an Independent that they only wanted to hear his policy expounded, after they had established whether he was with or against their chosen party. Then they would heckle happily or approve his points according to their political convictions. The Independent relied more upon his personality than most other candidates. A candidate could generally expect to be returned or defeated more upon the policy he stood for than any personal qualities and for this reason money was used to better advantage if spent on expositions of programmes.

It was probably not a good move for the Nationalists to urge people to remember that "FACTS AND FIGURES COUNT MORE THAN PROMISES" when Labour could turn on them with "REMEMBER THE CUTS" [1]. It was of little use for the Nationalists to quote statistics about increased production to a public which knew little about finance and could as well believe Labour's use of figures. They quoted [2]. Budgetary figures of 1935

1. See sample sheet Appendix C, III.
2. See sheet IV in Appendix C.

showing increasing farm production between 1928 and 1933 to indict the Coalition for being so "niggardly" while "Providence was most generous". What they did not remind the people was that the increased production did not mean increased wealth in the country, because of the lowered prices for farm produce and reduction of the Government's sources of taxes.

The National Party could not stir feelings of thankfulness by recitals of reduced Public Debt, increased bank deposits or greater tourist traffic when many people had no motor-cars or Savings Banks accounts. On the other hand, practically every elector would have had some unhappy experience which Labour candidates could call to mind for them in their ceaseless stirring among the ashes of the depression.

Neither side hesitated to take an advantage of the other, unfair or not. The firecracker of Savings Bank deposits set going a whole train of explosions from Labour, which attacked the commercial banks as a "gang of bushrangers" [1.] in retaliation for the Nationalists' allegations. In New South Wales in 1931, the Labour Government's handling of the financial crisis destroyed the people's confidence in the Saving's Bank. The consequent run on the Bank resulted in its closing the doors. This incident was recalled by Forbes, who declared that a Labour Government would menace the savings of the people and involve the control of the banking machinery of the Dominion. [2.] The Associated Banks of New Zealand, not liking

1. Quoted by Forbes in the "Press", November 9th, 1935.
2. ibid., November 9th, 1935.

Savage's reference to bushrangers, joined in with large illustrated advertisements of the New South Wales crisis. [1.]

Savage protested against these "large, unfair and lying advertisements", [2.] misrepresenting Labour's policy and resentfully criticised the Bank's coming out openly into politics to frighten the public. Labour indignation was voiced on the platform, in letters to the newspapers and in the "Standard", which on November 20th made reference to posters being prepared to fight the Nationalists' propaganda. However bank advertisements continued to appear, partly in self-defence - "Banks do not reap a harvest from financial bad times" - but also to attack, "Lord Snowden's warning - banks must be free from political control". [3.]

Both Labour and National leaders, however, prided themselves on their sense of fair play. Before the session ended, Savage promised that he would not use personalities in the campaign and he was sure that the other side would not "stoop to conquer". [4.] Yet one of leaflets widely distributed by Labour was undoubtedly intended as a reflection upon Coates, who was considered to have used national funds for excessive grants in his own electorate. [5.]

1. The first Associated Banks advertisement appeared in "Press" on November 5th, 1935.
2. "Press", November 8th, 1935.
3. Ibid., November 23rd, 1935.
4. Ibid., October 22nd, 1935.
5. See copy in Appendix C, V.

Even less than the Labour attacks, did the Nationalists like Democrat charges of trickery in the public accounting system, made possible by their ambiguous interpretations of the Auditor-General's report on technical difficulties. More justifiable was the Democrat complaint that public money had been used to produce a 20 page booklet on the Government's housing scheme, which was still only a project and not yet authorized by legislation, but which could nevertheless win support for the National policy.

The Labour Party lost no opportunity to attack the Democrats, making effective use of the organiser's fluctuations of political allegiance. Commenting that Davy had adhered to United and Reform in turn, then to their Coalition before he took up his latest proteges, the "Standard" [1] reviewed "the Promises of Davy" comparing them with "The Performance of Davy" and concluding that as little could be expected from the Democrats as the country had had from the Coalition.

It was mentioned earlier that the Labour Party made only infrequent use of newspaper advertisements in the pro-Government papers. This was partly due to the lack of money and partly to the development of their own weekly, the "New Zealand Worker" [2]. When the paper was issued as the "Standard" after October 9th, 1935, it became a valuable asset to the

1. October 30th, 1935.
2. The "Worker" had a circulation of about 10,000 and the "Standard", of about 15,000 in November, 1935, according to W.J. Wilson, editor of the "Standard" in a letter to the writer, 23-2-49.

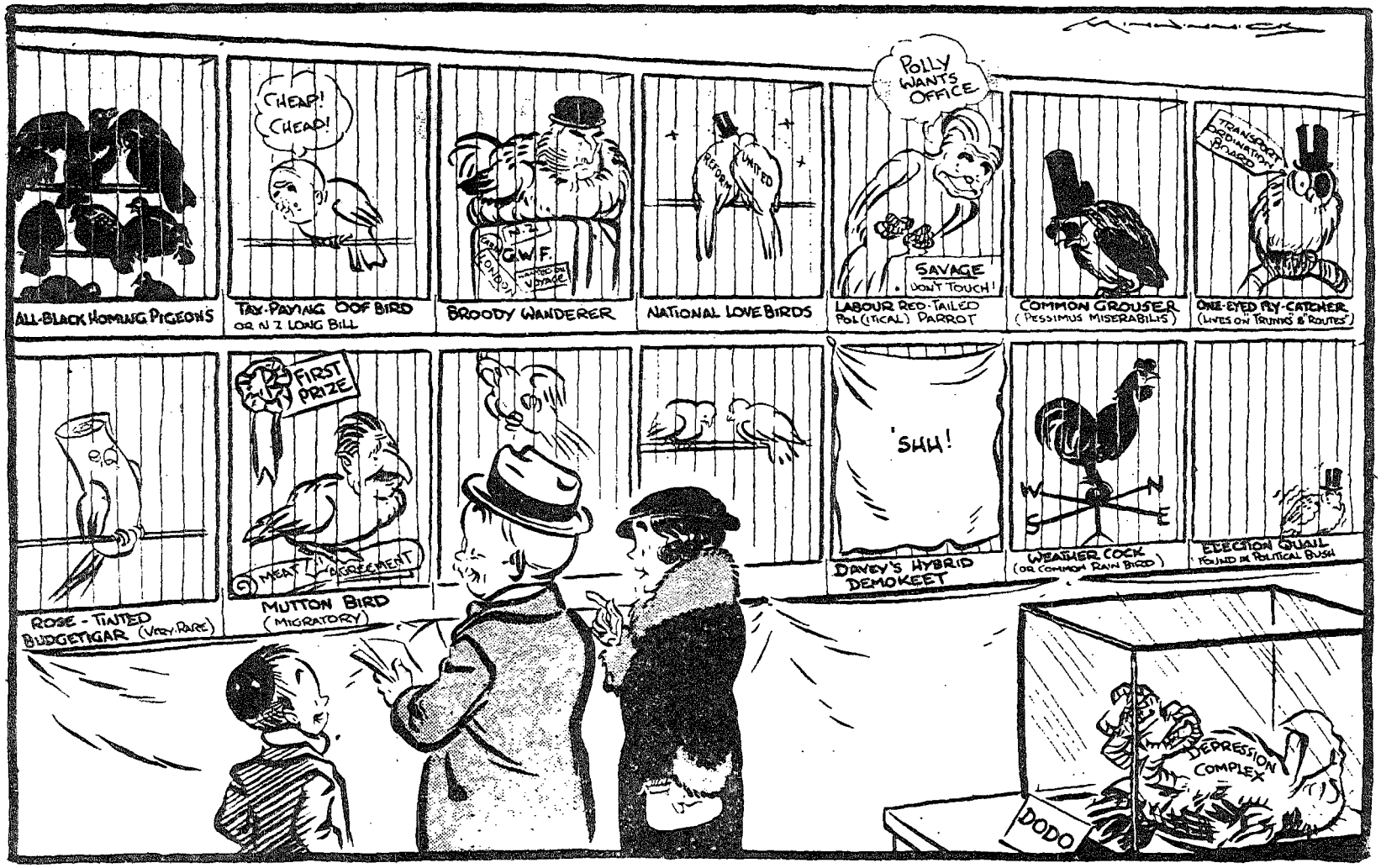
Labour Party in their election campaign. A number of additional features e.g. magazine features and illustrations, made it more popular. Both newspapers had a Dominion-wide coverage, most sales being in the cities.

To ensure that every corner of each electorate was reached by election literature, the Head Office arranged to issue material at a nominal charge to all Labour candidates. For many years it had been the practice of the Labour Party's National office to prepare pamphlets sold at a penny or twopence. Re-issues were now prepared and new subjects added. In 1935 the most popular one was Nash's "Guaranteed Prices" [1]. The others were: The Case for Labour: M.J. Savage.
Four Years of Failure: J.A. Lee.
The Conquest of Depression: J. Roberts.
A National Health Service: Dr. D.G. McMillan.
Commonsense of the Money Question: H.G.R.Mason.
and the Manifesto "Labour has a Plan".

Most of the printed pamphlets were ready in October, but were not used as expected. Letters, [2] urging the use of them, were sent out to candidates as late as November 12th. A circular dealing with candidates' questions and replies and prepared by the Head Office executive was distributed also to all candidates.

Cartoons were a constant part of the campaign propaganda. In most of the newspapers these were pro-National

1. 51,000 of Nash's, 30,000 of Savage's and about 200,000 other pamphlets and leaflets were distributed. See Labour Party Annual Conference Report, 1936.
2. A copy of such a letter, dated 12-11-35, was seen at the Labour Party's National Office, Wellington.



"AMONG THOSE PRESENT"

The Grand National Cage Bird Show opens to-day.

except that the Communist and Labour Parties were able to present their side of the picture in the "Workers' Weekly", and the "Standard" respectively. The periodical "Tomorrow", which had Socialist sympathies, also caricatured the Nationalists and Democrats, but it could reach very few in comparison with the cheaper newspapers. The pro-Government cartoons had the advantage of being more artistic and of having a wider audience. They still shared the defect of exaggeration which destroys the cartoon's power of conversion. From the nature of the cartoon which raises a laugh, it is not a weapon. It entertains friend and foe alike and its spirit of mockery may be turned against both.

Among the records of election material kept by the Labour Party was a slide used for advertising in picture theatres. No doubt other parties must have made use of this method. It would have the advantage of keeping up contact with the electorate in areas not constantly served by election campaigns. It would also reach some who might otherwise ignore political propaganda, and as a temporary measure had perhaps more value than the gramophone technique tried by the Democrats. Recordings of Hislop's recital of the platform were played in shop-windows in certain small towns not included in his itinerary, e.g. Rotorua and Cambridge.[1] No doubt, by this method, a few more people were persuaded to listen to the Democrat policy

1. Information supplied by Davy in an interview with the writer.

than could have been reached if they had been left to read, or ignore, the policy statements in the newspapers. Other candidates, besides Hislop, used the records, playing them at election addresses, familiarising electors with the leader's voice and helping to build up a national reputation for him.

Hislop had an advantage, in that, not being a Member of Parliament, he could begin touring the country while the other leaders were still hobbled to Wellington. There was, however, little advantage for him in having everywhere hostile commentaries from pro-National newspapers. He had head-winds all the way. Even the Communists were better served, for the "Workers' Weekly" did reach a certain part of the city populations. But no newspaper was allied to the Democrat cause, though for a time the "Evening Post" showed a mild interest in the new party; no popular cartoonist championed them; Hislop was always the upstart and Davy the wicked magician.

Much had been expected of Davy's propaganda. He was well-known for catchy slogans. Savage recalled [1.] such phrases as: "Keep in step with the Motherland", and "Keep your man in his job" or "Coats off with Coates", - the work of the "master mind" now behind the Democrats. Davy was looked upon as a bogey-man, more to be feared than his employers, the Democrat Party. However, the shadow was larger than reality.

The Organiser did not make use of newspapers for the

1. "Evening Post", October 3rd, 1935.

all-important policy statements. Individual candidates did, and other forms of publicity were not neglected but there was no sign [1] of nation-wide advertisements as used by National and Labour Parties. References to propaganda materials make it clear that the Democrats fought the election on paper as well as by speeches but the neglect of newspaper advertising was a real lapse.

It would not seem to be lack of funds which could account for this. Money flowed freely into other channels. To assist in recruiting candidates, the national organiser assured them that they would not be put to a penny of expense [2] and would be provided with a handbook to help in answering electors' questions.

Some aspects of general publicity arrangements were mentioned during the campaign. Copies of a pamphlet on Maori policy - the work of a special committee - were circulated in Maori constituencies according to Davy [3]. At an election address in Manukau, another Democrat publication was mentioned by an interjector. He referred [4] to a statement printed in a publication "issued in all the electorates".

1. In the newspapers searched by the writer viz. the "Press" Christchurch, the N.Z.H.", the "Evening Post", the "Dominion and the "Southland Times".
2. This statement was seen in the handbook. Davy remarked to the writer that the candidates "all put their hands out for their election expenses". This was in reply to a query whether the possession of private means was taken into consideration when selecting candidates. He said it made no difference.
3. "Evening Post", October 6th, 1935.
4. "New Zealand Herald", November 1st, 1935.

One form of cheap publicity enjoyed to a considerable extent by the Labour and National Parties was the increasing number of letters championing parties, in November issues of newspapers. Even this propaganda was denied to Democrats, who were seldom made the subject of correspondence. Indeed, any partiality expressed for them was usually of a rather grudging kind from correspondents who were afraid to trust themselves to the unknown evils of Socialist policies, yet were dissatisfied with the Government and so turned to the Democrats as the least of three evils.

Much use was made of the phrase "sick of the Government" in speeches and writings. The Coalition was probably defeated before it began fighting. The people were genuinely seeking for some one to lead them out of their perplexities, but it was not to be Hislop. Perhaps if there had been more time for the nation to begin to accept him as a familiar figure there might have been a different result. A party of personable candidates, with a few neat phrases summing up a moderate policy, should have had a chance to beat Labour for some of the shaky Government seats. But time was against the new party. A year had been lost in solving interval difficulties, when it would have been better spent in tours of the country by two or three of the leading lights of the party.

Although broadcast speeches would have reached a very large number of electors (without the hazard of heckling) use of the radio stations was not permitted to any candidates except for the final addresses by the leaders of the major parties.

There was no Minister of Broadcasting then, the National Broadcasting Service being controlled by a board, which made the decision to ban election speeches. This rule extended not only to "A" or Government stations but also to "B" or commercial ones. The Auckland B station (1.Z.B.) in 1935 was directed by a popular broadcaster, the Rev. C.G. Scrimgeour, who apparently under cover of philosophical remarks in his Sunday talks to "the man in the street" had infringed the no-politics stipulation, showing partiality for monetary reformers and Auckland Labour candidates. He claimed that his references to politics were only "in the broadest sense....appealing to people to put aside personalities". [1.] Nevertheless, he angered numbers of people from whom he had many letters and anonymous messages. This had been going on for some time but the "Worker" [2.] attributes his immunity from legal action to the weight of public opinion favouring his broadcasts.

It is very likely that the Government would be reluctant to authorize a move which would add to their unpopularity. Yet they did not escape being implicated in the disturbance on November 24th when the station's "Friendly Road" broadcast was jammed. There was a suggestion that Post and Telegraph officers were responsible, bringing from Coates the reply [3.] that the interference "is either a childish rag or an unscrupulous

1. "Evening Post", November 25th, 1935.
2. "New Zealand Worker", September 25th, 1935.
3. "Evening Post", November 25th, 1935.

attempt to make political capital by throwing suspicion on the Government". He reminded readers that he had already warned them to be on guard against last minute trickery.

There is no doubt in politics, at least, that "any cat in the twilight's grey." The Nationalists had recently wrung from Savage the accusation of "unscrupulous misquotation... to stampede the electors", [1] in connection with an incautious remark by Munro (Dun. West), who used the phrase "go out and smash things". If the Labour Party was elected to power it would be essential, for the success of their policy, to be able to control industry even if industrialists were not co-operative. "If we cannot carry out our policy", said Munro, "we will go to the electors and get a mandate, and if we can't do it then, the only thing to do will be to go out and smash things". [2]

Munro denied the accuracy of the Press reports, explaining that the smashing would be done by the people, not by the political Labour Party. Whatever he meant, there was a sting in the tail of Savage's defence of him. He could not imagine Munro to be capable of making the misleading statement attributed to him. This type of last-minute propaganda must have been considered an unexpected piece of good luck by the Nationalists as there was quite a battery of abuse about a party that was determined to "go out and smash things", the final rounds being fired by Coates in his broadcast address on Monday, 25th.

1. "Press", Christchurch, November 25th, 1935.
2. ibid., November 22nd, 1935.

If these trivial incidents could do so much to sway opinion at the last minute, it seems that the more serious issues of policy and past performance had less influence than they ought to have had. Were the New Zealand people so undecided that any sensation could persuade them anew? In any nation there are those for whom emotional appeal has more force than reasonable argument and in the greatest number of electors there is insufficient understanding of the issues involved, to know when they are being misled, so that a little trickery is a useful thing. The politician may excuse his half-truths and ambiguities since, if he troubled to make complete explanations of the economic issues or the political necessities, most audiences could remember only the simplest portions. The petty platitudes can evoke more agreement than a logical survey.

The elector most to be feared is he who makes up his mind from day to day, never satisfied with explanations given, never sure that there may not be just as much good in the other side. The election results show that there were large numbers of voters whose allegiances were not fixed. The candidates had already sensed it by the end of the campaign and naturally seized each opportunity to anchor the floating vote.

FORECASTS AND ESTIMATES.

Although speculation about the results of the election varies greatly, no one predicted such a swing of the pendulum violent enough to bring Labour into power with fifty-three seats out of eighty. It was generally recognised that the political situation was very fluid. Morrell remarked that "it was clear that a political re-orientation was in progress but it was not clear what the new direction would be."[1.]

There were no surveys of public opinion by the "Gallup poll" technique. Speeches and writings of the times indicated that an increased vote against the Government was inevitable but a cautious tone pervaded most estimates. Those who tried to feed the fluttering pulse of the populace were generally deceived in diagnosis. There were groups whose loyalty was unswerving but many more were quick to respond to personalities at election meetings but would be equally quickly inconstant in private debate. The correspondence columns of newspapers show that many were still seeking enlightenment and trying to make up their minds in the last week before November 27th.

Labour underestimated their advance though all were certain that there would be increases in their numbers. Not even the most pessimistic Government would have believed that Carr's prophecy of "the biggest political landslide in the history of the Dominion" [2.] would be fulfilled. At worst they

1. W.P. Morrell in an article in the "Contemporary Review", March, 1936.
2. Rev. C.L. Carr, (Labour M.P.) in debate as reported in P.D. Vol. 242, p.312.

could visualize being reduced to a minority Government, dependent on a handful of Democrats and Independents. It was common for the minbr groups of candidates to predict their successes bravely as part of the technique of campaigning.

The defensive tone of both National candidates and their supporting newspapers and journals warred against the occasional hearty pronouncement . W.P. Endean, Government member for Parnell, considered that the people were going to put in "the same stable government" [1.] as before, refusing to admit the possibility suggested to him that New Zealand was "at the crossroads". Nevertheless, there was no lack of warning from other judges of the situation, that there was a great deal of opposition to the Government waiting to be expressed on November 29th. In 1934, shortly after the announcement of a new Democrat party, the "Evening Post" spoke of the need to settle the question of the Coalition's becoming one party for the election. "The Coalition has lost ground and should hasten to re-establish itself". [2.] The commentator claimed that there was a solid body of opinion which would support "so-called unpopular policies provided that they could be framed efficiently and fairly".

The advent of the Democrat party in September and in the following month the resolution of the Coalition to form a

1. ibid., p.367.
2. "Evening Post", Wellington, October 18, 1934.

National Political Federation began a year-long battle for election. Just as each party or candidate made political use of fear and sombre warning, or cheerful hope as new developments dictated, so they themselves suffered alternation between optimism and doubt. Any comforting auguries were hailed with relief - but these were not easy to find. Not since 1925 had there been a party sufficiently satisfactory to the people to be returned to power with a majority of votes. Earlier depressions in 1922, 1909 and the 1880's had been followed by rejection of the party in power. It did not necessarily follow that Nationalists would automatically be knocked by the swing of the pendulum since they had had longer in which to repair the damage to their defences. But as if it was not enough to have a multiplicity of parties again with the Democrats taking the third place, as well as having the gloom of depression still shadowing the recovery efforts, there was also no better fare to offer than the mixture of the last few unappetising financial gruels, slightly sweetened while Labour offered rich-sounding, new recipes.

If closer inspection was made of the changes in the basis of Labour's support in the previous decade the National Party must have foreseen that the advances made by Labour in rural areas would continue. Following the 1921 depression five of the seventeen elected members were from wholly or mainly rural electorates, [1] but in 1925 there was a reversion to the normal political allegiance with rising export prices, when

1. Appendix to P.D., 1922, H.33.

four of those five seats were lost.[1] The exception was Buller, which was not wholly rural in that its electors included many miners - always staunch unionists. Moreover the Labour candidate there was H.E. Holland, the Party leader, and an outstanding figure among politicians.

The election of 1928 was preceded by poor prices overseas for dairy products. Labour again advanced, gaining three rural seats and one partly rural, in addition to three city seats. Only one of the rural seats was lost three years later.[2] These rural gains were negligible beside the much greater success in city areas and might have been expected to continue in threes and fours but not to be quadrupled, as happened in 1935.

BY-ELECTIONS:

There was no warning of the coming reversals in any of the by-elections between 1931 and 1935. There were only four of these; two in the one constituency, Lyttelton. Each was decided more by the personality of the leading candidate than by the policy of the party he represented.

The first was in Motueka in 1932. The previous representative, G.C. Black, held the seat against the candidature of K.J. Holyoake with a majority of only 500.[3] Black's death left Holyoake (Coal.) as the only well-known figure to

1. ibid., 1926, H.33.
2. ibid., 1932-3, H.33.
3. "Press", November 27th, 1935.

contest the election against P.C. Webb (Lab.) and the Hon. R. McKenzie (Lib.) Webb came from Westland to contest the seat. He was a formidable opponent, being an experienced speaker and a well-known unionist, but he was too aggressive compared with the more acceptable personality of Holyoake. Though the latter won on a minority vote owing to the three-cornered contest, his was the person and policy most acceptable to the farming majority. The election could offer no pointer to the sweeping changes to follow.

In the following year the death of Holland of Buller gave Webb the chance to contest an election nearer home. Holland had been opposed by a Government candidate, J. Menzies, but only one Independent Liberal stood against Webb. Having no party backing and being a stranger from Hawkes Bay [1.] H.O. Simson could not be expected to defeat Webb, who won easily. [2.]

Webb met with some opposition from mining officials but they were not strong enough to put up a candidate of their own against him. He does not seem to have been popular with the rank and file of the Miners' Union, [3.] although they did stay away from the meetings organised by the mining officials in protest against the selection of Webb as a candidate. This may have been due partly to apathy towards politics between general elections but more likely to Labour sympathies which would not be alienated even by a unsuitable candidate.

1. "Press", October 16th, 1933.
2. Webb, 4,799 votes, Simson 2,249. ibid. November 23rd 1933.
3. ibid. November 22nd, 1933.

It is difficult to understand why no Government candidate was found. Certainly there was no organisation for the Coalition able to swing quickly into action for an unexpected by-election. The large vote for the Independent suggests that the anti-Labour vote might have been stronger had there been a Government candidate whose stronger backing would have attracted many more of the shifting votes than a non-party man could expect to do. Very many electors did not go to the polls [1]. so the Buller by-election could not be called a mandate to Labour and the Government could hope to do better there against Webb than had been possible against Holland.

A more decisive mandate was given to the McCombs family, each election strengthening their hold on the Lyttelton electorate. In 1931 J. McCombs, a veteran Labour politician, only with difficulty retained his seat against F. Freeman (Coal.) having only 32 votes to spare. Two years later Mrs. E. McCombs defeated Freeman with a majority of 2,669. The ebbing of Freeman's previously strong following would be due principally to discontinue with the Government, then deep in depression disputes. Mrs. McCombs could claim it also a personal triumph. She had been her husband's interested helper; had contested an election on her own account in Christchurch North in 1931 and was assured of goodwill in the Lyttelton electorate for her

1. Whereas in 1931, 8099 votes were cast, in 1933 there were only 5,048. Only 74.71% of the possible votes were recorded compared with 86.57% in 1931.
From information supplied by the Chief Electoral Officer, Wellington.

sympathetic work in easing women's difficulties during the depression. Curiously enough, there was no increased feminine voting, the proportion of women's votes being slightly less than at the earlier general election. [1.]

The third McCombs (T.H.) owed his election in July, 1935 even more to the unpopularity of the Coalition. Politically inexperienced, youthful and unknown, he was opposed by M.E. Lyons (Nat.) a Christchurch City Councillor who was well-known, a lively speaker and forceful personality with a long record of public service. National supporters claimed that it was his parents' record that won the seat for the son, but Labour sympathisers approved of McCombs's good platform manner and his competent arguing. The Socialist journal "Tomorrow" noted also that whereas McCombs had assistance from his party leaders' visits to the electorate, Lyons "preferred to conduct his own campaign", suggesting that by minimising his connection with the Coalition, he was emphasizing his own acceptability in preference to that of Coates' or Forbes'. [2.]

The Labour Headquarters found that there was an immediate response to the request for funds for the election. "Money came in from individuals and organised workers all over the Dominion". [3.] It was considered, then, that Labour would have no difficulty at the November election in keeping all those

1. ibid.
2. "Tomorrow", July 31, 1935.
3. The Labour Party Annual Conference Financial Report. See also published lists of subscribers in the "Standard", June - July, 1935.

seats it already held. Semple had already confidently asserted that the Labour star was in the ascendant. "Never before did he remember such pronounced hostility towards any Government". [1.]

LOCAL ELECTIONS:

With few by-elections to substantiate prophesy, the Labour party members were re-assured by the local-body elections in May, 1935. Labour Mayors were elected in Dunedin, Christchurch, Petone and Gisborne and there were advances in Labour's representation on city councils. [2.] In Auckland they gained seven additional seats, in Dunedin, three and in Wellington they won all of the Harbour Board seats.

Labour opinion [3.] held that municipal elections did not represent the true state of political feeling owing to the multiple property voting which was permissible [4.] at that time. In the opinion of a local official, [5.] it was very likely that multiple voting favoured the non-Labour candidates. He quoted the case of one man, a Citizens' Association candidate for 1935 municipal elections in Christchurch, who was able to vote fourteen times by virtue of his many chairmanships in various businesses. This view of possible misrepresentation takes no account of the number of companies not represented in the

1. The "New Zealand "Worker"," May 1st, 1935.
2. "New Zealand Worker", Wellington, May 22nd, 1935.
3. ibid.
4. See Local Authorities Handbook, 1937-8, p.X. for regulations.
5. The Ass. Town Clerk, Christchurch, in conversation with the writer, 12th September, 1948.

election through lack of interest on the part of those authorised to use the company vote. It is not possible to know whether the company's representative voted for the traditional representative of the property-owning class. His political views might not coincide with those of the management.

From the National point of view, these municipal elections, at least in Christchurch, had valuable and heartening lessons to teach their politicians. This City Council had its Labour members reduced from eight to four. Councillor W.S. McGibbon expressed his pleasure at the Labour repulse which showed that "the citizens can, when organised, secure victory against the highly-organised Labour party machine. [1.]

Confidence fluctuated in every party during the trying months of campaigning. Before long, the Nationalists were fidgeting to be done with dragging end-of-session debates, knowing that in the electorates the Labour party workers and Democrat candidates were busy undermining Government support. To gain a majority of seats, Labour had to advance by seventeen, which would have seemed an improbable addition but for the threat of the Democrats. One of the staunchest supporters [2.] of the Government complained that the Democrats would be practically an addition to Labour. This same periodical in October, after stoutly declaring that the Government would be returned to office, although Labour might slightly increase its voting power,

1. "Press", May 10th, 1935.
2. "Mercantile Gazette", p.1,034, Vol. II, Sept. 18th, 1935.

now cautiously referred to "the prospect of Labour being in power - a mere possibility." [1.]

Labour, too, had moments of gloom. Though they looked to the equitable franchise of the general election giving them ever greater chances of winning new seats than did the encouraging victories of May, there was still the problem of the split vote to worry them. Electors were warned that although none of the factions from the Democrats down had any chance of defeating the Government, this intervention could only "confuse the issue and ease the Government's position." [2.] Like most commentators, Labour journals over-estimated the Democrats' strength. "The balance of power is the maximum hope of the Democrats", [3.] was an early estimate from the Socialist publication "Tomorrow". They were denounced as "wreckers" by the Nationalist press. The "Evening Post" showed more interest than other newspapers when the new party was first formed. Often quite critical of the Coalition, it saw in this creation of the Democrats a response to public desire for a change in the political situation, noting that there was general dissatisfaction with the Government. Some favourable publicity was given to the new party's tentative policy until October 13th, 1934. After this the "Evening Post" returned to the Government fold until the following year when Hislop's announcement of the party programme was reported. [4.] The editor was impressed, encouraging readers to take hope from "the skilful

1. ibid. p.1,173, October 23rd.
2. "New Zealand Worker", May 29th, 1935.
3. "Tomorrow", July 24th, 1935.
4. "Evening Post", October 2nd, 1935.

appeal", yet advised them to reserve judgement until "Mr. Hislop reveals his financial proposals in more detail".

Other editors had already made up their minds, and the "Evening Post" soon toed the National line with them. They probably agreed with the judgment of the pro-Labour view that "the Democrats represent nothing but exceptionally narrow special interests, and individual ambitions which hope to be carried into power without responsibility on the despression resentment of the urban middle class". [1]

Another daily paper which had its Independent moments was the "Auckland Star", which had no sympathy with Labour's hazily outlined fifth plank - the state control of currency. It criticized Savage on November 6th and 9th for lack of detail about currency proposals, but on November 8th took Forbes to task for his violent language on the same subject. Reproving him for "scare-mongering", it thought that Forbes was not entitled to say, having associated with the Labour members, that he respected them and then ask the country to believe that if the same members formed the Government, they would bring on the Dominion "a worse disaster than the depression". [2]

Possibly there were other independent newspapers like the "North Canterbury Gazette" edited by O. Duff, an Independent candidate in the Prime Minister's electorate, but it was rare in most of the Dominion's newspapers to find any criticism of

1. "Tomorrow", August 21st, 1935.
2. Forbes, as reported by the "Auckland Star", November 9th, 1935.

the Nationalists.

The Press's partiality was set aside for the reporting of candidate's meetings and speeches. Each candidate in the election, with the exception of the Cabinet Ministers and leaders of parties, was allowed one column in which to expound his views and thereafter received only brief mention of meetings and short extracts from speeches. A candidate was allowed to nominate the meeting at which he would receive his full report. [1.]

The knowledge that the press was in sympathy with the Government transferred interest from editorials to the correspondence columns. An occasional correspondent was appreciative of the editorial attitude towards letters hostile to press opinions, and seemed surprised that so many were printed. There was no evidence, however, that letters expressing hostility to the Government predominated in the Christchurch "Press". An analysis [2.] of the correspondence in the two weeks preceding the election does not reveal anything, unless perhaps an editorial weakness for anti-Labour letters. There is no evidence of the great swing-over to Labour, which surely had crystallised by this time.

It is curious that while politicians and editors continued to denounce Democrats with bitterness, the correspondents were neither critical nor much interested. Perhaps realising how little headway the third party had made, they wished to con-

1. This information came from an editorial reply, in the "Press", November 4th, to a correspondent.
2. Correspondence on politics in 12 issues of the "Press", Ch.Ch

	Govt.	Lab.	Dem.	Others.
Mainly approving	11	11	7	4
Mainly criticising	17	21	3	-

centrate attention on the two main contestants. In contrast with the serious attention with which most electors heard election speeches, they tended to treat the Democrats as an entertainment in company with the weakest candidates of other minor groups. The elector would not relish the additional leaflets to read and policy to puzzle over. More meetings to attend if he was to make up his mind fairly were tedious calls on his time. It is very likely that the Democrats were dismissed as 'forlorn hopes' rapidly and only the person who got some fun out of political meetings would bother to attend many. It would appear from the general tone of newspaper comment that the hopeless position of the Democrats as an alternative Government was clear by the end of October. [1.]

The Government, too, failed to re-establish popularity. Many of their supporting voters were not very enthusiastic about them, intoning two variations on this chord of diminished popularity; in a minor key "Better the devil we know...." or in cheerier mood they echoed Downie Stewart's "Better to bear the ills we have, than fly to those we know not of". It would, of course, have been impolitic for either National Candidates or their allies, the press commentators, to admit the possibility of defeat but it must have occurred to them that the situation was critical. There was no doubt of the Government's earlier unpopularity but it was very difficult to assess how much ground they had recovered.

1. "Auckland Star" November 5th, 1935: "They have not won any considerable body to their side".

The Dominion tours made by the party leaders had results that immensely strengthened Labour confidence, but in contrast to the enthusiasm with which Savage was invariably received, Forbes often had disturbed meetings. The worst receptions were in the cities where pro-Labour audiences were boisterous, but even in the smaller rural towns, he had trouble in getting a hearing. At Dunedin he had many interruptions and "when Mr. T.K.S. Sidey endeavoured to move a vote of thanks to Mr. Forbes.... he was literally howled down". [1.] In a crowd of more than 2,000 at Invercargill one section "treated the proceedings with some levity but they were good-humoured and far from critical". [2.]

The North Island equivalent of the Dunedin tumult was experienced at Masterton, where the Prime Minister was counted out by a large section of the audience when he began to discuss the Labour Party's schemes. "The meeting terminated noisily, there being as much applause as booing". [3.] Speaking at Wanganui, Forbes referred to the Labour programme "but was almost continuously interrupted by cheers". [4.] In Christchurch "one noticeable feature of all the Prime Minister's meetings.... has been the unusually large number of women who attend". [5.] Certainly more women voted at the election but their numbers rose in proportion no more than did the men's. [6.] There were no

1. "Press", Christchurch, November 18th, 1935.
2. ibid. November 21st, 1935.
3. ibid., November 14th, 1935.
4. ibid., November 12th, 1935.
5. ibid., November 19th, 1935.
6. Proportion % of votes recorded by men and women to total number of electors on the roll (From statistics in Appendix to A.J.H.R., 1936, A - J.) 1928: Men, 89.03, Women 87.03. 1931: Men, 84.51, Women 81.99. 1935: Men, 92.02, Women 89.46.

aspects of policy directly addressed to women; their increased interest does indicate, though, the greater thoughtfulness with which the election was approached by all voters.

Savage everywhere received very attentive hearings; reports from Hamilton[1.] and Thames[2.] mention this and also the large audiences and enthusiastic receptions. At Invercargill an excited audience carried the vote of thanks by singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow"[3.] It is not surprising to find that Savage was openly forecasting that there would be a Labour Government, not just in the effusive way of a politician advertising the party, but after weighing up the impressions he had received during a comprehensive tour. He said, on his return to Auckland, that there were at least 50 seats in New Zealand where Labour had a fighting chance. "I am confident that the Labour Party will have 43 to 44 seats in the next Parliament".[4.]

This was the time of year for summing-up to be done as a guide to the voter who was still wondering how to use his vote to best advantage and might still be won over to the Nationalists. In spite of the opportunities for reporters to be in possession of as much information about meetings and tours as was possible for anyone to have, after following election campaigns for several weeks in many districts served by their newspapers, not even they predicted the change that came. Some of

1. "Press", Christchurch, November 21st, 1935.
2. ibid., November 18th, 1935.
3. ibid., November 13th, 1935.
4. "Dominion", Wellington, November 22nd, 1935.

their remarks were simply declarations of hopes couched in emotive and persuasive language.[1] Some were more sober judgements, but even so were surprisingly wrong in that the extent of the capture of rural seats by Labour was seldom envisaged.

In the Auckland province where "the chief issue was a bitter fight over Labour's guaranteed prices scheme,"[2] the Democrats had made so little impression that they were not mentioned. Of the ten city electorates, five were considered certainties for Labour and so they proved. Only one of the remaining five was felt to be a Government stronghold. More hope was felt for retaining the country seats. Even there only five out of fifteen were considered safe for the Nationalists but two of these five went to Labour as outright wins.

There was the same foreboding about the Government seats in the southern half of the North Island, where a multiplicity of candidates would make minority wins possible. There was no hope of capturing any urban seats and slender chance of retaining either Wanganui or Palmerston North, but of the ten rural areas the Government was expected to have to concede two only to Labour, while three more were considered unsafe. The results revealed that only one rural constituency was left to

1. "There is a hopeful chance that Mr. C.A. Boles (Nat.) will beat Mr. F. Langstone, the sitting member for Waimarino". "Press", Christchurch, November 22nd. "In Manukau, Mr. W.J. Jordan (Lab.) who loses no chance of ingratiating himself with the electors, is having a harder fight this time". ibid., November 22nd,
   The emphasis is mine.
2. "Evening Post", Wellington, November 26th, 1935.

the Nationalists.

There was more pessimism about Nelson and Canterbury seats, but with less reason. The Nationalists lost only two of the six seats held, but only Forbes felt confident of being returned. In Motueka it was expected that "Holyoake's personality and sincerity" [1.] were likely to mitigate the Government's unpopularity. This hope was realised but elsewhere it was held that that the Government's chances were prejudiced by probable vote-splitting and by the increasing defection of small farmers to Labour. The Temuka seat brought the curious result of remaining National when most observers prophesied its loss. The Labour newspaper [2.] made the same mistake about Mid-Canterbury. It correctly claimed that "the Government will lose Otago seats" [3.] The "Evening Post" [4.] agreed, putting the losses at three; results made it four. There was expected to be a close fight for Dunedin West, whose retiring member was the former Minister, W.D. Stewart. He considered that there was a huge inarticulate mass of Liberals in the country and thought that the result of the election would be "confusing" [5.] He expected that there would have to be another appeal to the electorate. This forecast was more wide of the target than any other and was indicative of the extreme difficulty of interpreting the mood of the people.

1. "Evening Post", Wellington, November 12th, 1935.
2. "Standard", Wellington, November 6th, 1935.
3. ibid., November 6th.
4. "Evening Post", November 26th, 1935.
5. The "Press", Christchurch, November 20th.

Not even the best informed forecaster could feel certain that he had heard the populace's heartbeat distinctly. Sudden shocks could make it skip a beat or two. Budget announcements probably won some grateful widows, war veterans and other pensioners, and some Government employees, whereas the Scrimgeour radio sensation on November 24th probably influenced waverers to join the Labour cause. The very weight of the Press battery against Labour may have roused resentment in some electors who voted against the Government. Practically the whole Press of the Dominion were trying as hard as the politicians to bend the people to their will. With a Hitlerian force fulness they told and retold their conservative tale, urging people to play safe. But the recent economic transfusions had sent such a heartneing flow of new blood through the bodies of depression victims that they felt adventurous and unwilling to take the rest of the treatment.

THE ELECTION AND THE RESULTS.

With the arrival of election day all attempt to persuade the elector was halted. Newspapers published no letters relating to politics. No further contact with voters was made by candidates. The Christchurch "Press" replaced its usual impersonal weather report for the day with some joyous phrases: [1] "No more perfect day than that enjoyed in the city yesterday could have been wished for, and coming as it did after a return to temperatures approaching those of mid-winter, it was all the more welcome. The sun shone brightly from an almost cloudless sky from early morning. The evening was fine and clear, and favoured the large crowds which gathered in the Square to hear the announcement of the election results".

In Auckland that evening, there was a different sort of enjoyment. The "Press" reported - "Wild Enthusiasm - Vast Audience cheers Mr. Savage". He seemed to have aroused admiration even among opponents. The "Evening Post" [2] reported his Auckland reception as a personal triumph for the "persuasive and urbane" Labour leader, and paid tribute to Labour's enthusiasm and infectious faith. It also commended the Labour leaders for viewing their victory as imposing

1. "Press", Christchurch, Nov. 28th, 1935.
2. November 28th, 1935.

a great responsibility on them for the people's welfare.

In Wellington at a less happy gathering Colonel C.H. Weston, chairman of the National Political Federation, praised the Labour Party for having fought a "clean, fair fight". [1] Forbes agreed and commented on the Labour Party's wonderfully well-organised campaign. His next public announcement was of his own withdrawal from the premiership and the calling together of the Cabinet for the following day (Nov. 29th). The Government's resignation was decided on for the Wednesday, a week after the election date. The new Labour cabinet was chosen by the next day and sworn in two days later. [2] This leisurely procedure, which was repeated by Holland and Fraser at the changeover in 1949, was in marked contrast with the swift reversal in Britain in 1945. [3] Churchill's resignation and Attlee's appointment took place within the half-hour on the evening of July 29th when the final counting was done.

There were three Cabinet Ministers among the defeated Coalition members. J. Bitchener (Waitaki) was over seventy years old and took no prominent part in campaigning so his defeat may not have surprised the Nationalists. The other two were C.E. MacMillan (Tauranga) and J.A. Young (Hamilton) in Auckland electorates where political tension

1. "Standard", December 4th, 1935. It was reported that another voice had commented: "That's more than can be said for the other side", - presumably the Democrats.
2. "Press", December 5th, 1935.
3. MacCallum and Readman, "The British General Election of 1945", pp.245-6.

had been highest. There was no valedictory for these men but it was regretted [1.] that "the swing of the pendulum lacked ability to discriminate.... Mr. Downie Stewart ought not to have been a victim". His resistance to party pressure to accept measures he thought violated honest economic principles had not been forgotten. There were still many who considered him a martyr to an unprincipled Cabinet, Coates having suffered most from comparisons with the still untarnished Stewart.

The toil-stained Coates had gone out on the depression tide and now had great difficulty in getting back. It is significant that both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister retained their seats on minority votes. Coates's majority was reduced to 302 over the Independent candidate. The Democrat made little difference in the contest [2.] so that it appears to have been hostility to Coates and not the third party's intervention which reduced Kaipara to a minority seat.

Where Coates made enemies, Forbes was more tolerated. He lost the people's confidence because of his mediocrity. To the thousands who like to see in the Prime Minister a kindred spirit, Forbes might have been quite popular in years of plenty. While his subordination to the abler Coates had saved him from personal enmity to the same extent, it had also left him with small claim to the nation's confidence in his

1. "Evening Post", Nov. 28th, 1935. See also similar comments in "Round Table", Vol. 26, p.427.
2. Coates 4,738 votes, Grounds 4,436, Caughley 528.

leadership. Coates's unpopularity undoubtedly reacted on the fortunes of the rest of the party. There was a severe rejection of Nationalists - a "political landslide" said the newspapers. Many Nationalists were defeated and of the seventeen [1.] returned, eleven had decreased majorities.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULT:

Elections do not conform to mathematical probabilities and the law of averages. The greater the number of contending parties and the smaller the number of candidates in each, the less chance there is of having a calculable result or one corresponding to the strength of each party as revealed by their share of the total votes.

Although there is no doubt that the Labour Party was the most popular of any group contesting the election, it was largely fortuitous that fifty-three Labour members were returned. The results exaggerated the amount of public acceptance of their policy, which nevertheless could now be imposed upon the majority who had not voted for it. The allocation of seats did not do justice to the National Party's following and certain of the lesser political groupings had no voice in the national administration, though they represented a considerable portion of public opinion in the country.

The seating in the House would have been considerably different had each party been represented in proportion to the votes given them.

1. Seventeen, plus two who were new members of Parliament.

TABLE NINE.

Party	No. of Candid-ates	Total of Valid Votes	Seats Won	% of Votes	% Seats due pro-portly.	Average No. of votes per Candidate.
Lab.	70	392,965	53	46.08	37	5,383
Nat.	70	280,222	17	32.88	26	3,783
Ind.	36	65,858	4	7.72	6	1,860
Dem.	53	66,695	1	7.83	6	1,258
C.P.*	3	7,366	1	.86	-	2,455
Lib.	5	3,976	-	.46	-	795
MAORI:						
Nat.	4	12,589	2	50.7	2	3,147
Rat.	4	8,569	2	30.4	2(?)	2,142
Dem.	3	1,472	-	5.9	-	491
Ind.	8	2,202	-	8.9	-	275

* Country Party.

It is clear that though Labour may not have had a majority election, only they were entitled to govern. They approached close to having half the available votes; so near that had there been proportionate allocation of seats they would have had only 4 fewer than an absolute majority. Four Independents and one Democrat were elected who had always favoured Labour, so there would scarcely have been a problem of minority government.

Certainly the National Party could not, under pro-

portional representation, have claimed title to Cabinet positions. Even if they had so achieved 26 seats instead of 19 actual, and had amalgamated with five possible Democrat additions (under such a scheme there would have been five, not six, as Atmore was in Labour's camp), that would still have given them a group only 31 strong.

Since Labour had over 110,000 votes more than their nearest rivals, it was reasonable that they should have sufficient seats to give them a clear majority. If hampered by having to make unsatisfactory combinations with Independents who might have demanded odd legislation for their support, the Labour Government would not have had a fair chance to put into action the programme on which they were later to be judged once more. They could, as results stood, go ahead unfettered in the knowledge that a fair accompli would win over many of the doubtful section of the electors.

Besides the large numbers of voters who had actively rejected Labour, there were also those who had been faced with only second-best choices in candidates through the lack of a representative from the party they favoured. There were six pakeha electorates where no National candidate stood; Labour failed to provide candidates for six pakeha and all Maori electorates. [1] (See Table 10).

1. There were three unofficial Labour candidates in Maori electorates, the most favoured getting only 644 votes so it is unlikely that they were looked on as Labour. The Ratana candidates, however, polled very well - perhaps because Tirikatene (M.P.) was a known Labour supporter. If (as could be done at the next election) their votes were added to Labour's total, this would have given the Govt. over 50% of the total votes i.e a majority.

Then there were other minorities everywhere with no opportunity for expression. Thousands of Liberals had probably been disenfranchised by the coalition of their United Party with the conservative Reform. They might perhaps be considered better able to accept the Nationalist programme, with its promises of State housing and health schemes, [1] than Conservatives. Among them, however, were some who formed a small, new Liberal Party for the election, suggesting that they could not look on the leadership of Forbes as sufficient assurance of the Liberal content of the National Party's platform.

There were good reasons for the Labour and National Parties' decision not to go to the polls in full strength. Closer examination of the results shows that in eight of these fifteen seats there were strong candidates who won with absolute majorities:- 4 Labour men, 3 Independents and 1 National (Ngata of Eastern Maori). Their strength must have been obvious before the campaign began and a deterrent to rival parties' wasting money attacking safe seats. One other seat was retained without trouble by Atmore, who, though calling himself Democrat, had been for years previously an Independent, usually voting with Labour.

Of the other five seats where there might have been hope for another candidate, two had close voting simply because of competition from two other candidates - a fourth added to the contest would not have clarified the position

1. "Dominion", November 22nd, 1935.

TABLE TEN. NO LABOUR OPPOSITION.

Electorate	Successful Candidate	Contests: Safe	Close	Minority	Other Candidates
B.of Islands	Rushworth (I)	x			Nat.
Franklin	Sexton (I)		x		Nat.,Dem.
Mataura	MacDougall (I)		x		Nat.,Dem.
Nelson	Atmore (D)	x			Nat.
Kaipara	Coates (N)			x	Ind.,Dem.
East.Maori	Ngata (N)	x			Ra.,Ind.
North "	Henare (N)			x	6 Others
South "	Tirikatene (Ra)			x	Nat.,Dem., Ind.
West "	Te Tomo			x	Ra.,Dem., 2 Ind.
	NO NATIONAL OPPOSITION.				
Auck.Central	Parry (L)	x			Dem.
Avon	Sullivan (L)	x			Ind.
Gisborne	Coleman (L)	x			Ind.
Thames	Thorn (L)	x			Ind.,Dem.
Egmont	Wilkinson (I)	x			Lab.
Well.Suburbs	Wright (I)	x			Lab.

so the Labour Party was wise in not presenting new members of their Party at such difficult contests as Franklin and Mataura.

It is surprising to find that even without a Labour candidate to oppose him, Coates had a hard struggle against the Independent, Grounds, who was within 300 votes of the

Minister. Henare's reduced support was natural in a contest with 6 other candidates, but Coates's reduction must be considered a personal defeat. He was the real spokesman of an unpopular administration. His inability to retain even the same amount of support as Forbes did, was in ratio to the greater responsibilities he had had to shoulder.

TABLE ELEVEN.

15 Highest Individual Votes.		Highest % of Votes Received.	
Nash (Lab.)	11,878	Webb (Lab.)	76½
Lee "	9,828	Parry "	75
Jordan "	9,345	Lee "	74¾
Sullivan "	8,955	Nash "	74¼
Richards "	8,728	Armstrong "	73
Savage "	8,567	Savage "	73
Howard "	8,464	Sullivan "	72
Armstrong "	8,299	Jordan "	70¼
Semple "	8,208	Wilkinson (Ind.)	70
McKeen "	8,170	Fraser (Lab.)	69
Fraser "	8,113	Howard "	69
Mason "	7,749	Mason "	68
Jones "	7,715	O'Brien "	68
Barnard "	7,290	McKeen "	67
McCombs "	6,955	Barnard "	66

TABLE ELEVEN (Contd.):

Highest Votes for Nationalists.		Highest Votes for Democrats.	
Holland	6,174	Reed	3,895
Bodkin	5,994	Stallworthy	3,481
Endean	5,758	Veitch	3,308
Smith	5,662	Hislop	2,688
Roy	5,445	McKenzie	2,640
Campbell	5,212	Caro	2,479
Stewart	5,200	Donald	2,045
Kyle	5,123	McDonald	2,033
Holyoake	5,115	Neiderer	2,182

One guide to the popularity of the contestants is the proportion of votes they received out of the total poll in their electorates. The results [1.] show that just as Labour won most seats, their candidates won the honours for candidates receiving most votes. Twenty-four Labour candidates received higher totals than the highest National total of 6,174 votes, the record score being 11,878 for Nash. He was returned with the greatest majority also - 7,757 - and for the second time his constituency recorded the highest number of valid votes - 15,989, (1931: 15,551).

National and Democrat candidates were far outdistanced. The only candidates to approach Labour for popularity were Rushworth and Wilkinson, who received respectively 60% and 69% of their electorates' total votes. No 1. Table 11.

National candidate received more than 60%. The highest individual poll (6,174) went to Holland of Christchurch North, but his share was less than 50% of the votes.

The Democrats fared worst - the greatest support for any one of them being only 33%. Their failure was spectacular and unexpected. No one thought they could win many seats but it was a surprise to most observers when they failed to win any. There were a few close fights in three-cornered contests but no Democrat managed to poll more than a third of the possible votes. Veitch, retiring member for Wanganui, did best but most Democrats lost their deposits.[1.] Their greatest support came from urban areas but unfortunately while their businessmen supporters were concentrated there, so were the working class families who were firmly attached to Labour and far outnumbered the more well-to-do electors.

Another guide to the changed conditions of election in 1935 is seen in the decreased and increased majorities for retiring members. In this election 21 Labour candidates received increased majorities compared with 2 Nationalists. All but one of the elected Independent candidates had increases and so did Rushworth of the Country Party. Decreased

1. Candidates losing deposits: Democrats: 32 out of 56. Independents: 25/42. Liberals: 4/5. Communists: 3/3. Independent-Labour: 4/5. Nationalists: 1/74. Socialist: 1. Country Party: 1/3.

majorities were suffered by 4 Labour men; and by 11 Nationalists, most of their setbacks being in rural areas.

TABLE TWELVE.

Places returning Labour for the first time.

	URBAN.			RURAL.	
N.I.	Waitemata	N.I.	Marsden	N.I.	Waipawa
"	Eden	"	Thames	"	Masterton
"	Hamilton	"	Hauraki	"	Wairarapa
"	Wanganui	"	Tauranga	"	Rangitikei
"	Palmerston	"	Waikato	"	Otaki
		"	Rotorua	"	Bay of Plenty
		"	Hawkes Bay		
S.I.	Dunedin W.	S.I.	Wairau	S.I.	Kaiapoi
"	Dunedin C.	"	Mid. Canty.	"	Waitaki
"	Invercargill	"	Oamaru	"	Chalmers

TOTALS: 8 + 13 + 6 = 19.

TABLE THIRTEEN.

Number of Electorates.			Seats held by Labour.				
N.I.	S.I.		S.I.	1931	1935	N.I.	1931	1935
51	29		Urban	6	9		13	18
80			Rural	3	8		2	16
				9	17		15	34

This brings us to the question: Was it in rural areas that the Nationalists lost ground? Which groups had Labour won over? Going back to 1931 we find that in the North Island Labour had previously held 13 urban seats and only 2 rural ones. [1.] The 1935 results levelled the previous predominance of city support as 14 rural areas swung over to Labour. Nine of these electorates were areas where dairying predominated - the small farmers' preserve in the North Island, the region of greatest advance by the social credit monetary reformers. Six more of the 29 South Island seats were added to the 9 already held by Labour, so that they were now returned from half of the South Island seats. These additions represented a good cross section of the people, 3 being urban seats, 2 rural and Kaiapoi predominantly rural.

In both islands now the proportion of Labour's urban to rural seats was 9 to 8: almost an equal following in town and country. By observing changes in public opinion in later elections, it is possible to conclude that it was the rural areas that the greatest fluctuations took place. Lipson [2.] observed that by 1943, when the farmers were generally prosperous again and had some grievances against the administration, Labour lost heavily in rural areas as "farmers swung back to their normal political allegiance".

1. See maps in Appendix D, showing urban and rural electorates and Tables 12 and 13.
2. L. Lipson, "The Politics of Equality", p.235.

Then why had they changed over in 1935? Was it dislike of the previous administration or satisfaction with the Labour platform that moved them? Obviously both factors influenced voters but the positive reason would have greater force. They were simply satisfying the desire for safeguards for security and inclined too, to the party offering the most new services. In 1943, having security and satisfied that the guaranteed price had fulfilled its need, the farmer now was weighing the advantages to be gained by supporting a party not so devoted to urban interests and dominated by industrial connections.

MINORITY SEATS:

Was it true, as so many thought at the time, that it was the intervention of the Democrats in the critical contests that defeated the Government?

There were 35 electorates in which a candidate was returned by a minority vote. Labour won in 22 of these, polling 96,803 votes against 133,547, i.e. they received 42% of the total votes, less than the Nationalists' total. It appears at first that Labour candidates had less right to their victories than their opponents. However, a closer inspection of election results in these contests, reveals that in many cases it is difficult to judge whether the seat would have been won by the National or the Labour candidate had the intruding minor candidates been eliminated. Nor is it

likely that the Democrats were to blame for the Nationalists losing votes, when in so many electorates there were additional candidates who might just as readily have benefitted had the Democrats been eliminated.

For these reasons 7 of the 35 minority seats have been dismissed from the discussion, because confused competition among many candidates makes it unreasonable to judge which way a few stray votes might have gone.

In the remaining 28 minority seats were included three in which the Nationalists had little chance of overtaking the Labour lead. They were Eden, Wanganui and Invercargill. [1.] Eden went to Anderton because the retiring member, Stallworthy, not only had on him the taint of Coalition but had also taken on the Democrat label, associating with a party unlikely to reach Cabinet rank and therefore impotent. Anderton's lead of 2,500 would probably have been decreased had the Democrat been eliminated, but it is unlikely that Clarke (Nat.) could then have won, since Anderton was better known, having twice before contested the seat.

1.

EDEN.		WANGANUI.		INVERCARGILL.	
L. Anderton	5946	L. Cotterill	4887	L. Denham	4241
N. Clarke	3458	D. Veitch	3308	D. Reed	3895
D. Stallworthy	3481	N. Bain	1754	Lib. McChesney	2595
I. Pickering	155	I. Hogan	524	N. Miller	2708

WANGANUI was a similar case. Veitch, an ex-Coalition member was the one menaced by the Nationalist, not vice versa, but it is unlikely that he could have drawn all of Bain's votes to overtake Cotterill (Lab.)

INVERCARGILL: Here again the National candidate was the newcomer and unlikely to have done any better with fewer competitors. Reed (D.) was the Mayor of Invercargill and a Prohibitionist in a district where that conviction was a popular one, while both Denham (L) and McChesney (Lib.) had polled well in 1931 against the very popular Hargest.

Twenty five electorates remain, where either Democrats or Independents caused the winning of minority seats. Fifteen times it was a Democrat who split the vote - ten times, an Independent. Lipson [1] considers that "it is reasonable to assume" that most of the votes for Democrats were taken from the National candidates in these 15 contests. That is true of those electorates where the National candidates were the retiring members, receiving only a few hundred votes less than the successful Labour candidates. With luck and no Democrats, most of the extra votes could just have tipped the scales in their favour. The Labour gains in at least nine of those fifteen electorates could reasonably be said to have been made at the Nationalists' expense. But in the remainder there were Independents among the candidates who were only a little less favoured than the Democrats and who might well have shared in any redistribution, keeping comparative dis-

1. op. cit. p.231.

tances between National and Labour men much the same.

Of course, the Independents did their share of splitting votes, but they are a constant factor in elections and have to be expected as part of the risks of the game. Their numbers are observed [1.] to increase in critical elections such as 1931 and 1943, when they may be taken as a warning of unrest and impending change in the electorate's loyalties. Although the National Party could not have expected the debacle that occurred, they were fearful enough to spend money warning electors not to waste their votes on Independent adventurers.

More than two-thirds of the seats won by minority votes were those of smaller electorates having between 9,000 and 12,000 electors. In constituencies of over 16,000 voters, no minority seats were gained. Most of these large electorates were in city areas, where, of course, Labour was unshakeable, but it is still true to say that abnormal results, causing minority wins, do tend to occur in the smaller constituencies. The larger the number of electors, the closer to its correct proportion does party popularity become. It is impossible to say what effect larger populations in the crucial minority seats would have had upon those contests. Probably none, as in most cases there were indications that the successful candidate had some advantage over the others to earn him the extra votes.

1. Lipson, op. cit. p.229 and p.235.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE PUBLIC:

There has been a steady increase in public interest in elections since last century; the expansion of education has played a part, so have new techniques of electioneering and the widening distribution of newspapers; greatest of all is the ever-widening influence of State action.

The keen interest of the public in the election campaign, the packed meetings, the questioning had all aroused comment from old campaigners. There was a corresponding participation in voting, although it was not as great as in 1938 and 1946 when 93% and 95% respectively of the total electoral roll accorded votes. [1.] In 1935 the numbers were 90.75%. [2.] The years immediately past had called for extensions of the State into people's lives by the creation of unemployment benefits, by provision of temporary work; by unprecidented actions in raising the exchange rate and imposing controls on conditions of credit. Many young people had reason to be even more keen to take part in their first election by reason of having been made much more aware of the importance of Government decisions in their lives. The suspension of the twenty-one year olds' right to vote in 1934 would make participation the next year all the keener, so that there would be fewer than usual neglecting to vote.

It was noticed that women were showing greater interest in the election than usual according to a report [3.] of

1. Appendix to P.D. 1939 and 1947 H.33.
2. ibid., 1936, H.33.
3. Supra Ch. VI, p.20.

one of Forbes's Christchurch meetings. Though a higher percentage of votes was cast by women than for previous years in certain electorates, viz. Hurunui and Kaipara, the constituencies held by Forbes and Coates, as a whole women were less interested than men. This was true of all electorates but there were differences between the women of rural and city constituencies, rural women taking less part in voting than townswomen did - no doubt mainly because of their greater difficulty in attending polling booths and neglect of the availability of the postal vote. The greater interest of farmers in Government policies was left to be expressed more by the men.

Few people can consider that their lives are not, in some way, vitally bound up with the choice of government. In 1935 this feeling must have been particularly strong and the public's attitude was recorded both by their choice of representative and by the greater participation in voting.

We have seen that the Labour Party did not win this election on its own merits entirely. Yet consider what would have been the result if the election had taken place at any earlier time either by reason of conforming to triennial elections or by any unusually critical change in national feeling. The Coalition's popularity had been at lower ebb than in 1935, and with only an embryo Democrat Party to compete with the Opposition, it seems likely that Labour would have been returned and perhaps more decisively

in regard to total voting strength.

There was naturally much debate after the election as to whether the new Government had a mandate or not, and whether a party with only 46% of the votes had a right to impose radical policies on the nation. The question was merely academic as there was no alternative to a Labour Government. The unpredictability of election results had earlier prompted a minority effort to make some alteration to the electoral system which would allow parties to gain seats more nearly in accord with their voting strength. But neither of the major parties wanted it. Both preferred the gamble which could return them to power by the chance of minority votes.

Each stood to win or lose so much, but the risk had its attractions. The Nationalists, if returned at this crucial stage, could have hoped to swing the balance of popularity to their side by increasing the tempo of recovery. Another three years might have reconciled them to the people. The Labour Party, on the other hand, put in by a people weary of insecurity and seemingly insoluble problems, to see what they could do, might hope to work up their somewhat doubtful following into convinced support from the majority of electors. Three years would give them time to show their paces before the next big race.

IN RETROSPECT.

The National Party had only slender hopes of retaining a majority. Attacked on all sides they had had to drop back to a stolid defence that the hard times had been caused by world conditions impossible to resist, and that it had not been easy to deal with the crisis that developed, with one party in Parliament contributing nothing but criticism. They had to beat off charges of Toryism from Labour and of Socialism from the Democrats, of subservience to an out-moded financial system from the monetary reform bloc and of tinkering with sound finance from the opponents of exchange adjustment.

The increased exchange rate did not bring the grateful response expected from the farmers, who considered that it came too late. Without their gratitude, it was useless to have destroyed the unions' bargaining power, to have sent unemployed men (away from homes and families) to earn a few shillings daily at farm labouring. It was useless to have alienated mortgagors and loan agencies, the city businessmen and their few Parliamentary representatives, if farmers continued to resent the initial shock to their incomes, seeking consolation in the promises of credit-control advocates.

By 1935 the Coalition was suffering from fatigue

and exposure. Its members were ageing and their morale was poor. Having spent their ammunition with a few shots from the Budget, they had to rely on a scrap heap of spent endeavour, while Labour accusers fanned the fires of resentment in unemployed, teachers, pensioners, white collar workers, housewives and all who had known the bitterness of want.

Labour's wisdom in refusing to join a National Coalition saved them from association with a Government which pleased none for long. The critics of Coates's "socialism" taught Labour to soften its radical tone but they retained enough "new thought" to give hope to the struggling. In town and in country the people were tired of the Coalition and its attendant shadows. Though in rejecting the Nationalists they filled the vacancy with a Labour Government to their own surprise, they doubtless felt relief that the political situation was so clearly resolved and an end made to unsatisfactory compromise.

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APPENDIX A.

57 Rugby Street,
Merivale,
CHRISTCHURCH.

28th May, 1948.

Dear Sir,

I am engaged in research on the history of the General Election of 1935 in New Zealand for the purpose of completing my studies for the M.A. degree.

I should be very glad of any help you may be able to give me in gathering source material. Enclosed is a questionnaire on the personal history of candidates, which you will, perhaps, be good enough to fill in and return to me.

It would be of great assistance to me if you could suggest any authorities (published material or persons) who could supply information about the electoral contests, the political parties or the issues.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) C. G. Rollo.

APPENDIX A. (Contd.)

TO CANDIDATES OF THE 1935 ELECTION IN

IN NEW ZEALAND.

Would you please be so kind as to supply personal data relevant to the 1935 election, in answer to the questions below. Any information so given will be treated as confidential and will be used only for the complication of numerical tables.

Name: .....

Age (1935). .....

EDUCATION:

Primary: .....

Secondary: .....

University .....

Other sources of education not included in the above account .....

Occupation (1935) .....

Trade Union connections.....

Public service on elected Local Government Councils.....

Previous service in the House (mark with a tick) 1919-1922; 1922-1925; 1925-1928; 1928-1931; 1931-1935.

If candidates had a record of service in the House previous to 1919 please state the number of years so engaged.....

If candidate was elected to the House in a by-election please give the month and year of election.....

Thank you for your co-operation.

APPENDIX A. (Contd.)

In order that information about candidates might be as accurate as possible, letters accompanied by questionnaires were sent out to those wbout whom information was lacking. Some candidates had very full biographies in reference books such as Scholefield's "Dictionary of New Zealand Biography", and in "Who's Who in New Zealand", so that it was not necessary to write to every man or woman. Many, however, were untraceable, so that the records were not completed. Moreover, many of the candidates to whom letters were sent either did not reply (no doubt for a variety of reasons) or took the trouble to answer that they refused to comment. On the other hand several candidates made the effort to write in addition, valuable comments about the election period and personalities.

APPENDIX B.1.

SIMILARITIES IN LABOUR AND DEMOCRAT POLICIES.

1.	DEM.	Restoration of unemployed to normal work at full normal wages.
	LAB.	Legislation for a minimum wage and salary to provide an adequate living standard for all workers.
2.	DEM.	Restoration of all wage cuts to civil servants.
	LAB.	Restore all cuts made in wages and salaries.
3.	DEM.	Restore to a sound position the Superannuation Fund and protect the full superannuation rights of all civil servants.
	LAB.	Maintain the guarantees of the Public Service Superannuation system.
4.	DEM.	Establish a National Superannuation Scheme, and increase pensions for widows, soldiers, aged people and other beneficiaries.
	LAB.	Provide a superannuation and pensions system to supply an adequate income to the aged, the ailing, the widows and others unable to earn their own living.
5.	DEM.	Establish a National Health Scheme.
	LAB.	National Health service.

6.	DEM.	Restore confidence in business by reduction of taxation and the stimulus of our employment policy; develop secondary industry and encourage the investment of British capital in this country.
	LAB.	Organise productive development employment through Public Works, assistance to local authorities and fostering secondary industry.
7.	DEM.	A sound and practical education policy.
	LAB.	Re-organisation of education system.
8.	DEM.	Bureaucratic controls of Boards and Commissions to be replaced by advisory bodies.
	LAB.	Restoration of Mortgage Corporation to a Government Department.

New Zealand Labour Party

(Palmerston North Branch)

Dear Sir or Madam,

How do you like the way the Forbes-Coates combination are handling the Economic Crisis with its—

WAGE CUTS	**DISMISSAL OF WORKERS**
PENSION REDUCTIONS (Widows, Old Age, Etc.)	**WITH ITS CLASS LEGISLATION**

Would you like to see the Coalition Government removed from the Treasury Benches? How much would you give to see it?

WOULD YOU GIVE A PENNY?

Would you give a penny a week to put the Peoples' Party on the Government Benches?

The Labour Party is fighting an uphill battle against terrific odds. The Press, the large Landowners, the Banks and all the forces of organised wealth are combined against all classes of workers. Money is poured out like water to fight Labour, and if we are to change the system WE require the sinews of war. Our supporters are not wealthy, therefore we ask for one penny per week and no more. Will you help? If you agree with us, please sign the attached form and our collector will call on Saturday next for your first contribution of one penny.

NOTE: If more than one family in residence, please notify Secretary or Collector.

D. Wouldes, Secretary,
239 College Street

I hereby promise to endeavour to contribute one penny per week to the local Branch of the New Zealand Labour Party as my effort against the present oppressive Government.

Name.....

Address.....

This is MY opportunity to make a practical protest against the Coalition Government and it will cost ME one penny per week. I invite the collector to call on me on Saturday.

H. Medway, Printer, Main Street

APPENDIX B.3.

A typical extract from the Labour newspaper acknowledging contributions.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FUND.

Previously acknowledged	...	£732	7	2
"W.K."	...	1	10	0
Duntroon Branch	...	.	10	0
"G.R."	...	.	10	0
"P.D."	...	.	10	0
Methven Branch	...	.	14	0
C.W.R. Dixon, Palmerston South (tickets sold)		.	10	0
Brunner Branch (dance proceeds)..		1	14	6
Te Aroha Branch	...	50	0	0
		£788	5	8

From the "New Zealand Worker", July 31st, 1935.

APPENDIX C. 1.

Political Independents are Ineffective!

To carry out the work of rehabilitating New Zealand requires the endorsement of a **Definite Policy** by the election to Parliament of men who can be relied upon to carry that policy into effect.

This is no time for **Rail Sitters.**

Independents in Parliament **represent themselves** only. Their votes are usually cast in their own interests. We want men who will put the interests of the people—the interests of their constituents **first.**

The uselessness of political independents is illustrated by the considered opinions of men with long Parliamentary experience some of whose opinions follow:—

The Late Sir Joseph Ward said:—

"The Political Independent is worse than a political humbug. He is useless to himself and **useless to his constituents.** . . . He is a man who is prepared to hop over the rail on every occasion voting one day with the Opposition, the next day with the Government, when he thinks that will help him and then, when, for **his personal reasons** or because he is in doubt, he is afraid to vote on either side **he walks out and votes with neither.**"

Mr J. G. Coates (Minister of Finance) said that political Independents were unreliable and served no useful purpose.

Mr. M. J. Savage (Leader of the Opposition) in a speech at Palmerston demonstrated the uselessness of Independents.

Mr. G. W. Forbes (Prime Minister) said: "It will be a bad day for New Zealand if the Government has to depend on Independents. . . The member who only gives certain measures enthusiastic support and rushes into other lobbies when legislation is unpopular is no good either to the Government or to anybody else."

MR. R. A. WRIGHT said (and he should know!): That ". . . an Independent belonging to no political party was **ridiculous.**" Mr Wright ridiculed the idea of having a House of Representatives of Independents—"because as soon as differences arose trouble would occur, and they would not get anywhere!"

MR. R. A. WRIGHT IS NOW AN INDEPENDENT WITHOUT A POLICY.

DO NOT WASTE YOUR VOTE

SUPPORT A DEFINITE POLICY—
THAT'S WHAT COUNTS.

VOTE LABOUR

P. M. Butler for Suburbs

Alex Scott & Co., Wgtn.—Presto Print

APPENDIX C.2.

MR. R. W. BOTHAMLEY

Democrat Candidate For OTAKI

MR. R. W. BOTHAMLEY

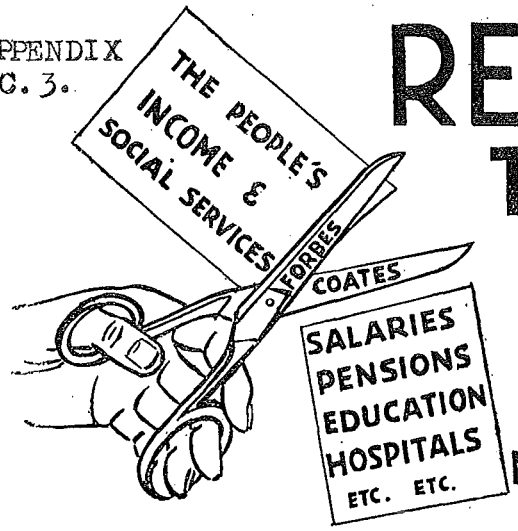
—is a Barrister and Solicitor now engaged in farming.

—for many years has been a member of the Makara County Council and Chairman for two years. Mr. Bothamley is also a member of the Hutt Valley Electric Power Board and present Chairman.

—is a member of the Executive of the Wellington Returned Soldiers' Association, and also a member of the Executive of the Wellington Free Ambulance Board, a member of the Executive of the Hutt-Makara Farmers' Union, and has served as a member of the Executive of the S.P.C.A. and the Wellington Navy League.

—Mr. Bothamley is an original and active member of the Royal Society for the Health of Women and Children of the Coastal Towns Branch.

Vote Solidly for BOTHAMLEY



REMEMBER THE CUTS!

MR. FORBES—"THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DO IT AGAIN"

Reply to Deputation: 19th Sept. 1935

Remember the Wage and Salary Cuts—
£110,000,000 Taken in Five Years from the People's Income!

Remember Old Age, Soldiers' and Widows' Pension Cuts—
They Spared Not the Aged, the Infirm or Returned Soldiers!

Remember the Cut in Education Expenditure—
The 5-year-old Child Excluded from our Primary Schools!

Remember the Plight of the Unemployed—
58,000 Suffering Poverty in the Midst of Plenty!

Remember the Hospital Board Expenditure Cuts—
Hospitals £200,000, Mental Institutions £70,000 Less Yearly!

Remember the Position of our Farmers—
45,000 Unable to Meet their Liabilities!

Remember "Country cannot afford to go on paying for Social Services" —Hon. R. Masters speaking to Businessmen, Wanganui, November 1, 1935.

Vote LABOUR THIS TIME

Safeguard Your Income and Social Services!

APPENDIX C. IV.

NOT an ACT of PROVIDENCE!

When New Zealand's Forbes-Coates plus Democrat Members Government decided to slash wages and starve the people of New Zealand, New Zealand's productivity was at its highest level.

Production in volume (as per Budget, 1935) was as follows:—

1928-29	100
1929-30	103
1930-31	108
1931-32	112
1932-33	126
1933-34	126

Providence was never so bountiful. The skill of the human family was never so apparent. The depression was not an act of God, but was a refusal on the part of men to use the bounty of Providence.

The acreage of fruit was the highest on record at date of wage cuts.

The acreage of tobacco was the highest.

There were more cows, sheep, pigs — more work. But we cut wages.

PROVIDENCE WAS MOST GENEROUS.

FORBES-COATES WERE NIGGARDLY.

Give Your Vote to LABOUR and Regain YOUR Standard of Living

Standard Printing Works

APPENDIX C. V.

ART UNION PROFITS.

SOME INTERESTING PARTICULARS OF ALLOCATIONS.

The Government promised early this year that the profits of future Art Unions would be used for National purposes only, but the recent allocation discloses the following grants to local Hall Committees in Mr. Coates's electorate:-

Kaipara Flats Hall	...	£ 50
Hukatere Hall	...	£100
Makaura Hall	...	£100
Mareretu Hall	...	£ 50
Tararaeka Hall	...	£100
Northern Wairoa, Mititai Hall		£100
Parore Hall	...	£100
		£600

Seven Halls - six of them in the Kaipara Electorate - and one on the border. The inference is clear -

NO PROMISE MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT CAN BE RELIED UPON!

Key to Map: New Zealand Electorates in 1935 — North Island

Majority are Rural Electorates

Exceptions: Mainly Rural Electorates :— Gisborne

Mainly Urban Electorates:— Hamilton
New Plymouth
Napier
Wanganui
Palmerston

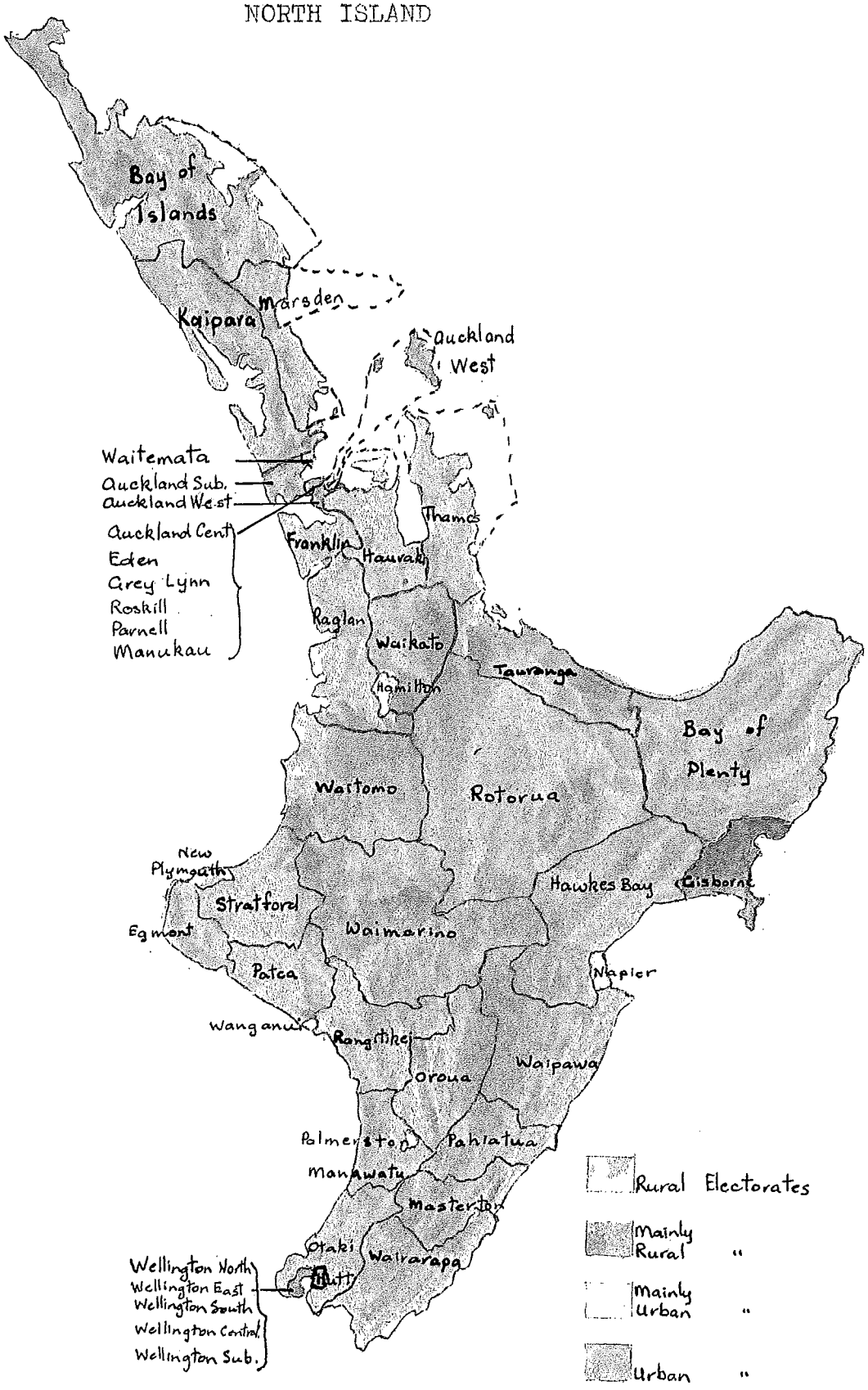
Urban Electorates :—

Auckland West
Waitemata
Auckland Sub.
Auckland West
Auckland Cent.
Eden
Grey Lynn
Roskill
Parnell
Manukau

Hutt
Wellington North
Wellington East
Wellington South
Wellington Central
Wellington Sub.

NEW ZEALAND ELECTORATES in 1935

NORTH ISLAND



Key to Map: South Island

Majority are Rural Electorates

Exceptions: Mainly Rural Electorates:- Westland
Kaiapoi
Riccarton
Lyttelton
Oamaru
Chalmers

Mainly Urban Electorates:- Nelson
Timaru
Invercargill

Urban Electorates:- Christchurch North
Christchurch East
Christchurch South
Avon

Dunedin North
Dunedin West
Dunedin Central
Dunedin South

SOUTH ISLAND